TEXTS FROM CHRISTIAN LATE ANTIQUITY

Volume 2

The Letters of

John of Dalyatha

The Letters of
John of Dalyatha

MARY T. HANSBURY

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INTRODUCTION

John of Dalyatha or John Saba, the "Elder," is the author of these Letters. He was born in northwest Iraq and was a monk during the eighth century in a monastery at Qardu near the Turkish border. He was actually born in the village of Ardamut in Beit Nuhadra near the mountains of Kurdistan.[1] At the local church he first studied the basics of Christian life for those destined for the priesthood or monastic life: studies of Scripture, liturgy, and writings of the Fathers.[2] Already as a student he frequented the monastery of Mar Afnimaran. But eventually he entered a different one, further from his home, Mar Yuzadak, in the mountains of Qardu, east of the Tigris near Turkey. This is thought to be where Narsai, the prolific sixth-century writer of Scriptural verse and commentary had lived, and that John may have returned here for this reason.[3] His novicemaster was a certain "Blessed Stephen," a disciple of Mar Yuzadak (early 7th cent.). Hence one may set John in an historical context with a possible birth date of 690 and date of death about 780.[4] From Qardu, after living seven years in community, he received permission to establish himself as a solitary and went to the mountains of Dalyatha (lit. "of the vine branches") at 3,000 meters. He lived most of his life there. These mountains must have been a tremendous influence on his insights, though in the Letters he mentions them only once.[5] Perhaps these mountains helped him to reach and speak of such a unity with God while never arriving at monism or denying the

[1] Details may be found in J. Chabot, "'Le Livre de la chasteté' of Isho'denah," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 16 (1896) # 126.

[2] J. M. Fiey, "La Bible dans la Vie de l'Église Syrienne Orientale Ancienne," *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* 67–72 (1966): 35–42.

[3] J. M. Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne*, 3 vols. (Beyrouth, 1965) vol. 2, 685–86.

[4] See R. Beulay, "Précisions touchant l'identité et la biographie de Jean Saba de Dalyatha," *PdO* 8 (1977/8): 103–16. See also Brian E. Colless, "The Biographies of John Saba," *PdO* 3 (1972): 45–63.

[5] Mountains, see Letter 37.2.

otherness of Christ.[6] He remained most of his life in the mountains, only returning to Qardu as a very old man when conditions had gone beyond his strength. At his return to Qardu other monks grouped around him and founded a community of which John was the superior until he died.

There has always been some confusion as to the authorship of the writings attributed to John of Dalyatha. Early manuscripts simply say "the Elder" or "divine Elder" although some references to Mar John the Elder do occur.[7] Not until the fifteenth century were two identities put forth, that of John of Dalyatha and John bar Penkaye. Others have reflected and written at length on this, and the present conclusion indicates that the author of the writings was in fact John of Dalyatha.[8]

In addition to the Letters he also wrote Discourses[9] and Chapters on Knowledge. The Letters are more personal in style than the Discourses since in the Letters he speaks of his own experiences. Sometimes he does this in the third person as a discrete way of dealing with their incredible and ineffable content. He truly speaks about God in a way in which few have ever heard him spoken of. John's is not an esoteric language, though some passages defy interpretation, but it is a language which pushes the limits of faith beyond where most are accustomed to go.

Love Of Tradition

The Syriac mystics[10] of the seventh century such as Sahdona, Isaac of Nineveh, Dadisho, Shemʿon the Graceful, and in the eighth century John of Dalyatha and Joseph Hazzaya all had a love of tradition and of the Fathers that made up that tradition. The early patristic writers, whether Greek or Syriac, tended to be conservative in wishing to do their theologizing within

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[6] See, for example, Letter 7. According to Blum, the non-duality of Stephen bar Sudaili may have influenced John's monistic tendencies. See G. G. Blum, *Mysticism in the Syriac Tradition*, Correspondence Course 7 (Kottayam: St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, 1990), 24–25.

[7] See Beulay, "Précisions," 87–102.

[8] Colless says that they may have been the same person. See Colless, "Biographies," 61–63. Beulay presents evidence and draws a different conclusion. See "Précisions," 98.

[9] Beulay's critical edition of the Discourses with French translation will be published soon.

[10] Mystics here refers to those who wrote about the experience of God in a systematic way. The style of this writing is different from that of Ephrem or Jacob of Serug, for example, although the content—the mysteries of the sacramental life—is the same.

tradition which was for them a principle of hermeneutics and a methodology.[11] Scripture and spiritual writings could only be understood in the context of the Church's living tradition. Some Syriac authors are more specific in citing the Fathers, while others like John tend not to name names. Sometimes the lack of names is a result of later editing to remove certain Fathers considered less than orthodox for various reasons at various times. The influences easiest to track in the present translation are those of Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394); Evagrius (d. 399); Macarian Homilies (4th cent.); Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350–428); Book of Steps (late 4th cent.); John the Solitary (5th cent.); Pseudo-Dionysius (5th/6th cent.).[12] Other mystical writers of the seventh and eighth centuries mention Babai (d. 628); Diodore of Tarsus (d. ca. 394); Theodoret of Cyr (ca. 393–460).[13]

As to what kind of influence the Fathers had on the seventh and eighth century mystics, and in particular on John, a very good analysis is provided by Beulay.[14] Not only does he trace lineage diachronically but he also does cross-textual studies showing how, for example, Evagrius might have influenced Isaac of Nineveh in a different way than he influenced John of Dalyatha. Included in the study is how the seventh century influenced the eighth century, such as Joseph Hazzaya's tremendous esteem for Isaac of Nineveh, referring to him as a "holy Father." Sebastian Brock's work on Isaac is very helpful as it includes so many references to East Syrian writers who influenced Isaac (and therefore John) or were influenced by him, or who simply demonstrate similar patterns of interpretation.[15]

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[11] See G. Florovsky, "The Function of Tradition in the Ancient Church," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 9,2 (1963–64): 181–200. This conservative aspect is also underlined by Amann, see E. Amann, "La Théologie de l'église Nestorienne," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 11, pt. 1 (1931) 288–92.

[12] See Beulay, LM. In the first part of the book, pages 16–181, Beulay considers the influences in detail of Gregory of Nyssa, Evagrius, the Macarian writings, John the Solitary, and Pseudo-Dionysius.

[13] See Beulay, LM, 184–223, where he looks at the dogmatic theological influence exerted by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, Theodoret of Cyr, and Babai.

[14] In the final section of LM, Beulay examines eleven authors in greater detail: (7th cent.) Sahdona, Dadisho of Qatar, Shem'on the Graceful, Isaac of Nineveh, Henanisho', John Bar Penkaye; (8th cent.) Abraham Bar Dashandad, John of Dalyatha, Joseph Hazzaya, Nestorius of Nouhadra, Berikhisho.

[15] See *Isaac of Nineveh (Isaac the Syrian) 'the Second Part,' Chapters IV–XLI*, ed./trans. Sebastian P. Brock (CSCO Syr. 224–25, 1995).

There is also an article by Brian Colless which looks in detail at many of the Fathers who influenced John.[16]

Finally, "Fathers" refers to the members of the monastic family who lived with these mystics and would have passed on the tradition of their lives to them: this is in fact the monastic way of learning.[17]

WAY OF WONDER

"Wonder" (*tehrâ*, *témhâ*) occurs very often in these Letters as noted throughout the translation. At the root of wonder in the Syriac fathers, at least as far back as St. Ephrem, is the understanding that a symbol contains what it symbolizes, at least in part, as opposed to allegory which only describes it. By allegory here is understood an image which explains and illustrates abstract ideas in a conceptual way.[18] The writings of John reveal a great sensitivity to the richness of the symbol which guards against abstraction without sacrificing intelligence. Whether it is nature which surrounds him or the situations in which he finds himself, John immediately connects these realities with the life of God. Because of the kind of writing he does, spiritual rather than exegetical, typology as evidenced in Ephrem is little found in the Letters, though scriptural references are certainly not lacking. But the nature and sacramental symbols are very common, continuing these aspects of Ephrem's world view. Similarly in John, this symbolic approach results in a sacramental view of the world leading to a sense of wonder and praise which renders all things holy.

In the Letters, several words are found for symbol: *râzâ* (mystery), *dumyâ* (resemblance), *dmûtâ* (form), *pélâtâ* (parable), *rémzâ* (sign),[19] *salmâ* (image). The most frequently used is *râzâ* which is another term for

[16] Brian Colless, "The Mysticism of John Saba," *OCP* 39 (1973): 83–102.

[17] Beulay lists many quotations which John says he has heard from the Fathers. See LM, 225–28.

[18] This distinction between symbol and allegory is made by Beulay. See Beulay, ES, 27. Neither Antiochian nor Alexandrian forms of allegory are at issue here although both are apparent in East Syrian writings: Antiochian from Diodore of Tarsus and Alexandrian through the writings of Philoxenus of Mabboug (d. 523) and others who knew Greek works in translation. Rather it is a rejection of a type of allegorizing which Ricoeur also considers to be an abuse of symbolism. See P. Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutics of Symbols and Philosophical Reflection," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 2 (1962–63): 191–218.

[19] For an excellent analysis of *rémzâ* see Khalil Alwan, "Le 'Remzo' selon la Pensée de Jacques de Serug," *PdO* 15 (1998–99): 91–106. Alwan also notes links with Narsai concerning *rémzâ*.

sacrament in the Syriac tradition. Both Scripture and creation are full of these symbols.[20] But they can never be grasped by discursive reasoning. A rational, purely intellectual approach will never open up what is not only described but also contained within the symbol. Since the time of Ephrem there has been within the Syriac tradition a rejection of discursive reasoning and of those like Arius who try to investigate the nature of God. The ways of these *bâsôyê* (inquirers, pryers) are rejected also by John. He says to flee from them and instead to carry the remembrance of God in one's heart (Letter 50.18) and to search for the vision of God's glory in the mirror of the soul (Letter 50.19).

One symbol in John spans all salvation history: the garment of glory/light. It is the "garment of light which our will has stripped from us" (Letter 4.6), from when before the Fall God had clothed us in light. Disobedience brings the loss of the garment of light and a need for the clothing of the "garments of skin" (Gen. 3:21). At the Incarnation, providence offers a way back to glory/light as Christ becomes incarnate in "the garment which He borrowed from us for his covering" (Letter 37.2). From the moment of Christ's immersion in the Jordan river, the garment of light is available again in baptism, awaiting its fullness at the end of time. In anticipation of the eschaton, the garment of light becomes a wedding garment and Christ becomes the bridal chamber: "He is himself their wedding feast and their joyful bridal chamber" (Letter 7.2). This symbol includes the Eucharistic wedding feast as well as the eschatological banquet.[21]

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[20] All the mysteries, *râzê*, throughout Scripture are gathered in Christ and once incarnated in him become present and active in all humanity through the sacraments. This is a major theme in Ephrem's teaching. See, for example, his Hymns on Virginity 28.2: "The scattered mysteries (*râzê*) from the Torah, you have gathered beside your beauty; the figures which are in your Gospel you have put forth. And forces and signs from nature, you have mixed <like> pigments for your image (*surtâ*)." See *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, Hymnen de Virginitate*, ed. Edmund Beck (CSCO Syr. 94, 1962). For comments on the symbolic content of the Hymns on Virginity, see *Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns*, trans. Kathleen McVey (CWS, 1989), 39–47. See also Seely Beggiani, "The Typological Approach of Syriac Sacramental Theology," *TS* 64 (2003): 543–57. Dalmais shows the similarities between Ephrem and Theodore of Mopsuestia concerning *râzâ* as well as links with Narsai's use of the concept. See I. H. Dalmais, OP. "'Raza' et sacrement," in *Rituels: Mélanges offerts au Père Gy*, ed. P. de Clerck and E. Palazzo (Paris, 1990), 177–84.18.

[21] See S. P. Brock, "The Robe of Glory: a biblical image in the Syriac tradition," *The Way* 39.3 (1999): 247–59. See also idem, *The Luminous Eye* (CS 101, 1992), 85–97.

For John, fire with its power is hidden in all the natures of the universe, as an image of the almighty power of God, totally in every place while not being limited by any place (Letter 25.2). In a text quoted by Beulay from the unpublished Chapters of Knowledge of John, one sees the unmistakable influence of the Macarian writings in this fire imagery.[22] And in Letter 51.9–10, John applies the properties of fire in a way similar to the description of the symbol of fire in Pseudo-Dionysius (Celestial Hierarchy, ch. 15).

At the Incarnation, bodies become instruments of knowing. For Ephrem "the incarnation is not only an action of redemption, it is also an action of revelation."[23] What nature and Scripture could not reveal, Christ brings in his body and in this encounter through bodily senses God's revelation is received. John is attentive to this symbolic dimension of the senses, especially to that of smell.[24] The "Fragrance of Life" which the solitary inhales reveals to him the Father (Letter 45.3). Through the power of the Spirit the soul breathes the sweet fragrance of its Beloved (Letter 31.4) and inhales this Fragrance of Life through the Living One. Finally, in Letter 49 there is the contrast between the vivifying smell of grace with the corrupting smell of error.

Mirror imagery is prominent throughout the Syriac tradition. Certainly Ephrem used it to explore spiritual perception.[25] In the later East Syrian writers such as John, Beulay thinks the root of the image to be in Gregory of Nyssa and to some degree in Evagrius. For John, God can only be seen in the mirror of the soul or of the person (see Letters 7.3; 14.2; 15.1; 28.2; 45.3; 50.19; 51.13). And although some of his texts seem to indicate that there may be a more direct vision without benefit of the mirror, these would be moments of divine light, and rather than a disappearing of the mirror, they are moments of an overabundance of light.

To participate fully in the inquiry concerning matters of faith, an attitude of wonder is required. But the contrary is also true—that faith leads to wonder. As Philoxenus says: "Understanding investigates natural things with speech but in silence, faith lays hold of those things which are above

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[22] See Beulay, LM, 64–69.

[23] Susan A. Harvey, "Embodiment in Time and Eternity: a Syriac Perspective," *SVTQ* 43 (1999): 120–30.

[24] See Susan A. Harvey, "Saint Ephrem on the Scent of Salvation," *JTS* n.s., 49 (1998): 109–28.

[25] Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 74–77. Three aspects of Ephrem's mirror imagery are considered: the mirror of the self; prayer as mirror; the mirror of Scripture.

nature."[26] There are many similarities between how the life of faith is described and the structure of the symbolic thought of the Syriac fathers; perhaps the two are interrelated in a way insufficiently understood. Perhaps further study of Philoxenus' chapters on faith[27] will lead the way, as well as study of Isaac of Nineveh who writes extensively on the life of faith as "insight without sight." The question of symbolic content in John has different parameters than its discussion in Ephrem,[28] but, as Beulay indicates, it is an area not to be ignored.[29] And a better understanding of John's use of symbol could go a long way in helping to decipher some of his more difficult passages.

PATH OF GLORY

If John's way of interpreting Christian life is symbolic and sometimes difficult to understand, the goal of the life which he offers is very clear and present in almost every Letter: the Glory of God and his Beauty. Reading through the Letters and the Discourses, one is struck by the quantity of references to the Glory of God, human participation in this Glory, and the manifestation of the Glory throughout Creation. However, when one looks to find other examples of the use of Glory in authors previous to John or subsequent writers, the results are meager. Beulay has checked other East Syrian Fathers for similar occurrences of the term Glory and finds its use in Isaac twice, Sheʿmun the Graceful once, Dadisho of Qatar twice, Joseph

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[26] See *Philoxeni Mabbugensis: Tractatus tres de Trinitate et Incarnatione*, ed. A. Vaschalde (CSCO Syr. 9, 1961), 105. Paraphrasing Ephremic exegesis Robert Murray similarly concludes: "As light is the condition for vision, so the condition for a proper recognition of symbolic discourse and of its force, as of the symbolic potentiality of the whole created world, is faith." R. Murray, "The Theory of Symbolism in St. Ephrem's Theology," *PdO* 6/7 (1975/76): 1–20, esp. 6. And Ricoeur reminds "You must understand in order to believe, but you must believe in order to understand." See Ricoeur, "Hermeneutics," 202. See also Sidney Griffith, "'Faith Seeking Understanding' in the Thought of St. Ephrem the Syrian," in *'Faith Seeking Understanding': Learning and the Catholic Tradition*, ed. G. C. Berthold (Manchester, NH: St. Anselm College Press, 1991), 35–55.

[27] See especially Homilies 2 and 3 in *Philoxène de Mabboug, Homélies*, tr. E. Lemoine (SC 44, 1956).

[28] See T. Bou Mansour, "Étude de la terminologie Symbolique chez Saint Ephrem," *PdO* 14 (1987): 221–62.

[29] See Beulay, ES, 19; 268–72. He also refers to M. Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* in his explanation.

Hazzaya four times.[30] So one may wonder where this emphasis on Glory comes from? In one of his Discourses, John describes the state of the soul which has seen the face of its Lord as "what the Fathers call rapture (*htîpûtâ*) to see the Glory of God."[31] Here he refers once again to the Fathers of the tradition.[32] In this same Discourse, John also says that there is progression in the rapture that it is dynamic. This dynamic quality, according to Beulay, would exclude Evagrius as a possible influence, because for Evagrius the vision of Glory is static and not dynamic.[33] This leads Beulay to consider Gregory of Nyssa as the patristic source of John's vision of Glory.[34]

Beulay also considers Babai to be an important influence on East Syrian mysticism in general,[35] passing on his scriptural and patristic precisions concerning the vision of God, particularly in his commentary on the Centuries of Evagrius. And although he demonstrates differences from Babai's thinking, John maintains the same distinction between Glory and Nature, as he says in Letter 50: "For his Nature is a glorious, many-splendored light. He manifests the light of his Nature to those who love Him in all the worlds—that is, his Glory, not his Nature." It is as if the Nature of God is light and his Glory is a flashing of this light: the flashing ever increases, but one never arrives at the light. John is consistent in his conviction of this distinction, unusually so since, unlike Joseph of Hazzaya, he is not given to speculation.

[30] See R. Beulay "Des Centuries de Joseph Hazzaya retrouvées?," *PdO* 3 (1972): 5–44, esp. 30–33.

[31] See Discourse 6, "On the visitations bestowed on solitaries," Vat. 125, 172a, as found in Beulay, "Centuries," 33. Unless otherwise noted, all other references to and selections from the Discourses of John of Dalyatha, in this Introduction and in the Notes, are based on: Brian E. Colless, *The Mysticism of John Saba*, Syriac text and English translation of the Discourses, reprint of Ph.D. thesis submitted in 1969 to the University of Melbourne. However, the numbering used by Fr. Beulay is followed here, see Beulay, ES, 23–25.

[32] John unfortunately does not specify which Fathers informed his understanding of *htîpûtâ*.

[33] Evagrius, Cent. 5.83. All references to the Centuries of Evagrius in the Introduction and notes refer to: *Les six centuries des "Kephalia Gnostica" d'Évagre le Pontique*, ed./trans. Antoine Guillaumont (PO 28 fasc.1, 1959).

[34] Gregory of Nyssa saw the spiritual life as a continual growth. See P. Deseille, "Épectase," *DSpir* 4 (1960): 785–86. For Beulay's conclusions see "Centuries," 33–34 and "Jean de Dalyatha et sa Lettre XV," *PdO* (1971): 261–79, esp. 273–74.

[35] See Beulay, ES, 433–37.

The words used for Glory in the writings of John are *šûbhâ* and *tèšbohtâ*. These together with *ʿîqârâ* and *škîntâ*[36] are the equivalent of *kavod* from the Hebrew root meaning heaviness and glory. *Kavod* is found to indicate power and majesty not only in nature and history, but also to describe an "outward manifestation of ultimate Reality."[37] Or as Morray-Jones' sources indicate "a primary materialisation of the divine essence,"[38] which is the *kavod* of Mt. Sinai (Ex. 33:18). The form of God on the throne in Ezekiel 1:26 is called the *kavod*/Glory of the Lord on the throne/Merkabah. This vision of Ezekiel probably inspired Deutero-Isaiah (ca. 550 BCE) in his vision of the eschatological glory (Is. 40:3-5). And there is little question that the Book of Daniel makes use of Ezekiel and that his "one like a son of man" is rooted in Ezekiel's Merkabah vision. Also Daniel as an apocalypse (ch.7, 8, 9, 10–12), forms part of the apocalyptic material which is taken up by Merkabah traditions.[39]

Perhaps one may suggest another possible influence in John of Dalyatha's glory imagery: the Glory of God or the *kavod* doctrine in Judaism and its development from Exodus to Ezekiel to Isaiah to Daniel and into Merkabah by way of Apocalyptic literature.[40] Deseille notes in fact that the biblical notion of Glory is practically absent from patristic sources until the

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[36] Later Jewish writings, such as in Hekhaloth and Merkabah traditions, tend to replace *kavod* with Shekhina. See G. Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead* (New York: Schocken Books, 1991), 147–57. On the significance of the Shekhina see also E. Urbach, *The Sages* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979), 37–65. See also the chapter of Chernus, "'Nourished by the Splendour of the Shekinah': a mystical motif in Rabbinic Midrash," in Ira Chernus, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 74–87. The term *škîntâ* (Shekhina) is found in Syriac writings and in liturgical texts. Isaac of Nineveh uses it several times in a long chapter on the cross. See Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, chap. 11. Sed sees a link between Jewish Targums and the use of *škîntâ* even in later 7th and 8th century Syriac writers. See N. Sed, "La Shekinta et ses amis 'araméens'" in MG, 233–42.

[37] G. Quispel, "Ezekiel 1:26 in Jewish Mysticism and Gnosis," *VC* 34 (1980): 1.

[38] See C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition," *JJS* 43 (1992): 3.

[39] Merkabah here refers to the esoteric Jewish traditions centered on the vision of God: the Glory of the Lord, seated on the celestial throne/Merkabah. For a brief overview see G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), 40–79.

[40] There are differing views about the historical sequence, especially the connection between Apocalyptic and Merkabah. See Martha Himmelfarb, "Heavenly Ascent and the Relationship of the Apocalypses and the Hekhalot Literature," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 49 (1988): 73–100.

third century.[41] This would coincide with the development, according to Scholem, of Jewish mystical documents. Originally they were thought to have been much later.[42] But, for example, already existing details of the Merkabah or the "throne of Glory" were elaborated in the first two centuries CE.

Direct links between John's glory imagery and the Merkabah tradition have yet to be established, but one can trace a development within Christian circles: for example, in Aphrahat, in Macarius, in Evagrius, in Stephen bar Sudhaili, and in Jacob of Serug.

In Aphrahat, particularly in his Demonstration 14, various scholars have noted a connection with apocalyptic traditions. Golitzin also sees glory imagery in it and even allusions to Hekhaloth literature.[43]

Scholem himself notes how Macarius offers a new explanation of the vision of Ezekiel and the human soul's becoming the throne of Glory which Scholem sees as a mystical reinterpretation of the Merkabah.[44]

Evagrius demonstrates a similar reworking of Isaiah's vision (Is. 6:1). As Stewart suggests: "What Isaiah saw with his 'prophetic eye,' says Evagrius, was his own truest self (his 'rational nature'), become the 'throne of God' by receiving knowledge of God."[45]

In the sixth century there is mention by Stephen bar Sudhaili, probable author of the Book of Hierotheos, of the vision of the throne by the mind which Guillaumont indicates is taken from Jewish mysticism.[46]

Finally in Jacob of Serug's beautiful homily: "On the Chariot which Ezekiel the Prophet saw," one finds examples from the Merkabah tradition. Golitzin notes that both Jacob and the rabbis are concerned about the possibility of experiencing Ezekiel's vision of the throne of Glory.[47]

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[41] P. Deseille, "Gloire de Dieu (chez les Pères de l'Église)," *DSpir* 39–40 (1967): 421–63. For the biblical notion of glory, see M. Weinfeld, "*kābōd*," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* 7 (1995) 22–38.

[42] See Scholem, *Mystical Shape*, 20.

[43] See A. Golitzin, "Recovering the 'Glory of Adam': 'Divine Light' Traditions and the Christian Literature of Fourth-Century Syro-Mesopotamia," *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism*, ed. James Rohr Davila (Brill: Leiden-Boston, 2003), 275–308.

[44] Scholem, *Major Trends*, 79.

[45] Columba Stewart, "Imageless Prayer in Evagrius Ponticus," *JECS* 9 (2001): 173–204, esp. 200.

[46] See article of A. Guillaumont, "Étienne bar Soudaili," *DSpir* 4 (1960): 1481–88.

[47] See A. Golitzin, "The Image and Glory of God in Jacob of Serug's Homily,

COMPANIONS ON THE WAY

Our companions on this path of Glory, from Exodus through the Syriac tradition and into Byzantine mysticism, culminating in Gregory of Palamas, are the angels.[48] A simple reading of the Letters offers a surprisingly large quantity of references to angels: description of them; their contacts with humans; quality of the relationship. Many of John's descriptions can be traced to Pseudo-Dionysius: "their beauty similar to God and united with his Glory" (CH 165A); "their simplicity and their ability to be in whatever place they desire" (CH 333B); "their multitudes" (CH 321A).[49]

John speaks of the contacts, and the converse and familiarity (*ʿényânâ*) between angels and the soul. The Angel of Providence (or Guardian Angel) shows his love and affection and how the Angel rejoices to be caring for him and utters in him "encouragements and compliments and comforts him" especially at the time of prayer, but at other times as well.[50]

Angels teach and transmit mystical graces from God to man.[51] But this teaching, even when done as purification, is never performed solely as a function, but with great love: "Oh how amazing is the love which they show to him who is thus mingled (*ethallat*) with them" (Letter 4.5). And this love is never an end in itself, but leads the soul to God. Thus the grace of the Spirit purifies and sanctifies the soul by means of the angels. And in the future age, God reveals himself directly.

Finally, one may ask of the quality of this relationship. In Letter 4.5, the soul recognizes in the angels his kindred. He realizes that not only does

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'On the Chariot that Ezekiel the Prophet Saw'," *SVTQ* 47:3–4 (2003): 323–364.

[48] Here is intended not a 'history of angels' but rather an overview of "Glory" from the Sinai experience to Gregory of Palamas, as some would see similarities between John of Dalyatha's vision of Glory and Palamite hesychasm, see Beulay, ES, 463.

[49] Quotations of John are taken from Discourse 14, "On prayer," Vat. 124, 314a–316a. References to Celestial Hierarchy are as found in *Pseudo-Dionysius, The Complete Works*, tr. Colm Luibheid (CWS, 1987). Beulay lists other quotes from Pseudo-Dionysius suggested by Discourse 14, see ES, 367–68.

[50] See Discourse 7, "On the love of the holy angels," Vat. 124, 304a–b.

[51] Isaac also speaks of this mediation: "…without the mediation of angels our intellect will not be able to attain to the revelations and insights which lead to that essential divine vision which is the true revelation of mysteries." Alfeyev sees influence of Ps.-Dionysius here. See H. Alfeyev, *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian* (CS 175, 2000), 227–28. But angels endowed with divine knowledge also appear in apocalyptic and rabbinic literature as teachers of men. This is the so-called "whisper of the angels."

he have familiarity (*ʿenyânâ*) with them but that he is united with them. Being led beyond the ties of this world, those who love are henceforth united to those who love in an ineffable dignity which is a resemblance (*dumyâ*) to the angels of light and fellowship with them.

With such specific words of unity, resemblance, and mixture, one might ask if this indicates the soul's becoming an angel or "like an angel." Monastic tradition, especially in the East, has always applied "angelic life" to monastic life, describing the heavenly character of a life in the presence of God, wholly consecrated to the glorifying of that presence, thus equal to the angels, "isaggelos." But the tradition out of which John is speaking seems to be saying something more specific. Perhaps the influence is Evagrian. According to Guillaumont,[52] Evagrius says clearly that those who let themselves be taught by the angels will become angels in the future world because to become an angel and to receive angelic functions is the same thing and that what defines an angel is not nature but function.[53]

Ephrem is another witness within Syriac tradition concerning this angelic life.[54] He calls angels "our companions" (*knâtê*, Hymns of Faith 46:8). And though they are far superior to man, the nature of the angels and that of the soul being different and distinct, man is capable of becoming a spiritual being through the process of divinization/theosis begun at baptism: "The Angels and the Watchers rejoice over that which is born of the Spirit and of water: / they rejoice that by fire and by the Spirit, / the corporeal have become spiritual. / The Seraphins who sing "Holy" rejoice, / that they who are made holy have been increased... Baptism is bringing forth / the heavenly from the earthly!"[55] This divinization/theosis does not mean man's becoming God or equal to God,[56] but may indicate a way of

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[52] See A. Guillaumont, *Les "Kephalia Gnostica" d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origènisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens* (Paris, 1962), 249–52.

[53] Babai, commenting on Evagrius, rejected this idea saying that there is no transformation into the nature of angels, but that those who have been instructed by angels in this world will be associated with them in their glory, not their nature. See Guillaumont, *"Kephalia Gnostica,"* 283–85.

[54] See P. J. Botha, "Fire Mingled with the Spirit: St. Ephrem's Views on Angels and the Angelic Life of Christians," *Harp* 8–9 (1995–96): 95–104.

[55] Hymns for the Feast of the Epiphany 6:7–8, tr. John Gwynn in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, vol. 13 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983). Ephrem, like John, situates this process of transformation within the sacramental system, beginning with baptism, which is a fundamental difference from Messalianism.

[56] See Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 148–54.

understanding companionship with the angels through God's heavenly gifts (Hymns of the Church 49:2).

Could John's angelology also be influenced by apocalyptic traditions? There is, for example, Enoch's transformation: "And I looked at myself, and I was like one of the glorious ones, and there was no apparent difference."[57] And again in the Ascension of Isaiah: "And I was transformed again and became like an angel... and I sang praises with them."[58] Himmelfarb considers this to be very significant and notes that such a claims of the achievement of angelic status appear within eight early Jewish and Christian apocalypses.[59] Further study of the relationship between apocalyptic/Merkabah writings and early monastic literature, especially Syriac, may yield more light on this subject of angelic fellowship, so prominent in the writings of John of Dalyatha.[60]

MESSALIANISM

Evidence of Messalianism can be found in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor from the fourth and fifth centuries. Messalian (*msâllyânâ* from the root *sl*ʼ, "to pray") indicates that prayer was the chief concern. Principally, they held baptism and the other sacraments to be ineffective against man's indwelling devil and that only prayer and asceticism could free one from passion and desire.[61]

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[57] See 2 Enoch 9:19, tr. A. Pennington in *The Apocryphal Old Testament*, ed. H. F. D. Sparks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). Idel cites certain interpreters of Jewish tradition who consider the transformation of man into an angel as the goal of Scripture. See M. Idel, "Enoch is Metatron," *Immanuel* 24–25 (1990): 220–40, esp. 236. See also Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism," 7–11.

[58] Ascension of Isaiah 8, 30–37, tr. R. H. Charles in Sparks, *Apocryphal O.T.*

[59] See Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Introduction.

[60] See article of A. Golitzin, "Earthly Angels and Heavenly Man: the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Niketas Stethatos, and the Tradition of 'Interiorized Apocalyptic' in Eastern Christian Ascetical and Mystical literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001): 125–53.

[61] There are various lists of Messalian doctrines. Stewart analyzes them and sets forth ten major themes running through the charges. Doctrinal themes: the presence of an indwelling demon in each human soul; the inefficacy of baptism for the expulsion of the demon; the sole efficacy of prayer for the expulsion of the demon; the coming of the Holy Spirit or the heavenly Bridegroom; liberation from passions (sometimes called `apátheia). Concerning practices: claims about visions and prophecy; avoidance of work and the desire for sleep; excessive sleep and claims that dreams are prophetic; disregard for ecclesiastical communion and

Ephrem mentions Messalians in his Hymns against Heresies.[62] The *Synodicon Orientale* records fifth and sixth century synodal condemnations of the Messalians.[63] Babai wrote a whole treatise against them, unfortunately lost, but even in his commentary on the Centuries of Evagrius, the subject comes up often. Thomas of Marga records several accusations made in the seventh and eighth centuries against individuals or monasteries.[64] Included among the accused was Mar Afnimaran, founder of the monastery frequented by John of Dalyatha as a youth.

John was accused by Patriarch Timothy I at the Synod in 786/787 of various Messalian tendencies, particularly of saying that the divinity of Christ was seen by his humanity. That other East Syrians accused him of saying that Christ could see God and therefore that the soul could aspire to this, may have been simply an East Syrian (Nestorian)[65] rejection of a Chalcedonian tendency. Beulay, however, points to the numerous times that John insists that the soul sees God's Glory and never his Nature. Further he maintains that there is nothing in the writings of John of Dalyatha that can be shown to be Messalian. He does allow the possibility that at the time of the accusations by Timothy, disciples of John could have removed things from his writings, although no evidence is given for this. It is thought that John died before the Synod, so was spared the sorrow of Timothy's anathema. Isho Bar Nun, who became Patriarch after Timothy, from 823–27, rehabilitated John as well as Joseph Hazzaya and John the Solitary, not finding anything in their writings worthy of criticism.[66]

In his important study, Columba Stewart concludes that the charges brought against the Messalians were not unusual. Other groups were

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structures; denial, perjury, and prevarication. See Columba Stewart, OSB, *'Working the Earth of the Heart,' The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts and Language to AD 431* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 52–56.

[62] See Stewart's view of Ephrem's position, *'Earth of the Heart'*, 15–18. In the same section of his book Stewart includes other useful patristic evidence concerning the Messalian controversy.

[63] *Synodicon Orientale*, ed. J. B. Chabot (Paris, 1902), 301–3; 374–75; 406–7; 607; 629.

[64] Thomas of Marga, *Book of Superiors*, ed. E. A. Wallis Budge (London, 1893), t.2, 95–97; 121–23.

[65] On the implications of this terminology, see S. P. Brock, "The 'Nestorian' Church: a Lamentable Misnomer," *Bulletin John Rylands Library* 78 (1996): 23–35.

[66] Ishodenah says that the judgment against Joseph Hazzaya may have been motivated by jealousy on the part of Timothy. See Chabot, "'Livre de la chasteté'," #125. See also Beulay, "Lettre XV," 269. He suggests that John may have been the victim of jealousy as well.

similarly accused. What does seem distinctive are issues of language and that "the 'Messalians' and the controversy which followed them were an irruption into the Hellenistic world of ascetical practices and imagistic language far more characteristic of Syriac Christianity than of the imperial Church centred on Constantinople."[67]

PRESENT TRANSLATION

This present translation has been made from the critical edition of the Syriac text as established by Robert Beulay:

> *La Collection des Lettres de Jean de Dalyatha*
> Patrologia Orientalis 39.3 180
> Belgium, Brepols, 1978

In addition, ample use has been made of Beulay's commentaries and his several articles.[68] I also am indebted to him for his many scriptural references cited in this translation. Scholarship owes him great gratitude for the amount and precision of the work he has done on John.

Soon there will be a critical edition of the Discourses with English translation by Brian Colless, as well as the edition by Beulay, and Colless also promises a monograph on John. Both will be significant additions to the discussion about John.

Finally, I thank Sebastian Brock for his help with this translation and his many insights into John's thinking. Also, to resolve some of the more difficult passages, Brian Colless graciously allowed me to consult his work on the Letters. And the Letters are the better for the careful reading and comments of David J. Lane +.

My father, William, during whose latter years of infirmity these Letters were being translated, understood John's symbolic world, may he rest in peace.

For the questions that may be left unanswered by the inadequacies of this translation and commentary, the reader is encouraged to follow John's opening remarks to the Letters: "Reading them one will understand," reading them with faith and wonder.

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[67] See Stewart, *'Earth of the Heart'*, 234–40. G. Quispel draws similar conclusions in his "The Discussion of Judaic Christianity" *VC* 22 (1968): 89–90.

[68] In addition to his *La lumière sans forme*, and *L'Enseignement spirituel de Jean de Dalyatha*, four of his articles are quoted amply in this work: "Centuries," "Précisions," "Lettre XV," and "Formes de Lumière et Lumière sans forme: Le thème de la lumière dans la mystique de Jean de Dalyatha," MG, 131–41.

This beautiful prayer from the Discourses seems to sum up the gentle genius of John: the hope which he offers of human transformation and the fulfillment of all desire rooted in the mysteries (symbols/sacraments) of the Christian life.

> O Christ, treasure of all goodly things, grant me perfect repentance and an aching heart that comes out in love to seek you. Without you I am a stranger to everything; grant me, O Good One, your grace. May the Father who begot you, from his bosom where you were concealed from eternity, renew in me the features of your likeness. Though I have forsaken you, do not forsake me; though I have abandoned you and gone away from you, come out to seek me and restore me to the fold; add me to the dear lambs of your flock, and feed me with them in the pasture of your holy mysteries, whose source is a pure heart wherein is seen the light of your revelations; that is the repose of the toilers who labour to that end through sufferings and torments of every kind. Our Saviour, may we all be counted worthy of it through thy gracious loving-kindness.[69]

[69] Found in Discourse 18, "On flight from the world," Vat. 124, 343b–346a.

List Of Abbreviations

CS	Cistercian Studies Series (Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo)
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (Louvain)
CWS	Classics of Western Spirituality (Paulist Press, New York)
DSpir	*Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* (Paris)
ES	R. Beulay, *L'Enseignement spirituel de Jean de Dalyatha. Mystique syro-oriental du VIIIe siècle*, *Théologie Historique* 83 (Paris, 1990).
Harp	*The Harp*: a Review of Syriac and Oriental Studies (Kottayam)
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies* (Baltimore)
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies* (Oxford)
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies* (Oxford)
LM	R.Beulay, *La lumière sans forme. Introduction a l'étude de la mystique chrétienne syro-orientale* (Belgium: Éditions de Chevetogne, 1987).
MG	*Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont*: *Contributions a l'étude des christianismes orientaux* , Cahiers d'Orientalisme 20 (Geneva, 1988).
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica* (Rome)
OrSyr	*L'Orient Syrien* (Vernon)
PdO	*Parole de l'Orient* (Kaslik, Lebanon)
PO	Patrologia Orientalis (Turnhout)
SVTQ	*St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*
SC	Sources Chrétiennes (Paris)
TS	*Theological Studies*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae* (Leiden)

Letters of the Saint, the great Elder,
sent by him to various persons.

Reading them one will understand their subject.

ܬܘܒ ܠܟܐܢ̈ܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܘܫܘܒܚܐ ܪܒܐ܁
ܕܐܬܛܪ̈ܕܘ ܡܛܠܬܗ ܠܐܝܫ.
ܕܡܢ ܡܪܕܘܬܗܘܢ ܡܫܬܟܠܠ ܐܝܟ ܢܒܝܗܘܢ.

LETTER 1

[To a great Elder of his acquaintance][1]

1. To the one, who by the divine light poured out in his soul, examines things hidden and learns the mysteries of the Spirit through the Spirit; who through the many-splendored Star[2] which rises from his heart, in the light is united to the light; in whom the Spirit has brought into being the gifts which have filled the ends of the earth; who inhales the Fragrance of Life[3] through the Living One, but is constrained to make it known by the stench of death.
2. My master, father of saints! Behold: for some time I have been waiting to meet your person, full of holy things and clothed in God, but the lameness of my feet hindered me until now. May the Spirit which is in you testify to you concerning this excuse.
3. May Our Lord grant me to see your face and gladden my heart from my adversities before the hour of the sun's setting on your departure for that luminous place of all lights—eternal life—lest, there in the clouds of the glory of your Lord, you be hidden from me and I not be worthy to see you because no one may enter that place who has not learned to experience it here below. For the eyes of one's mind are dazzled by the rays of light of the clouds which are outside of there and the mind is hindered from seeing. But the mind in which here below the radiance of Life has shone forth for its delight, when the sun has set from the pupil of its eye, it distributes its inheritance and leaves to meet the manifestation of the great Sun, the light of the heavenly worlds.

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[1] The titles, according to Beulay, were probably not written by John. See Beulay, *Collection des Lettres*, 43.

[2] Many-splendored Star: the root of this image is to be found in Heb. 1:3; Christ, the splendor of the Glory of God. The expression occurs several times in the Letters and in the Discourses with variations.

[3] For a discussion of Fragrance of Life (*rîhâ, d-haye'*) as a reality of the senses through which God acts, see Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "St. Ephrem on the Scent of Salvation," *JTS* ns 49 (1998): 109–128. The article includes references to both St. Ephrem and Jacob of Serug.

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ܩܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܚܕ ܪܒܐ ܒܪ ܒܢܝܗܘ.

1. ܒܕܘܒܘܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܕܒܫܡܗ ܐܢܫ ܒܫܢܬܐ ܚܡܫ: ܘܪܐܝܬ
ܪܘܚܐ ܒܝܕ ܪܘܚܐ ܢܒܝܐ: ܘܒܝܕ ܒܘܟܪܐ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܙܟܝܐ ܕܡܢ
ܠܟܠܗ ܕܢܚ ܒܝܘܡܘܗܝ ܠܒܘܗܘܪܐ ܡܠܐܟܝܐ: ܘܫܘܩܐ ܐܬܒܠܠ
ܫܘܩܒܠ ܡܒܒܕܢܘܬܐ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܒܗ ܐܬܒܠܒܘ ܫܠܡ ܪܒܝܢ ܢܚܐ
ܒܝܕ ܢܚܐ: ܘܡܬܐܠܒܪ ܒܫܪܝܘܬܐ ܫܘܐܬܐ ܠܫܘܘܕܝܐ܀

2. ܡܪܝ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܐܒܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ. ܗܘ ܡܢ ܙܒܢܐ ܡܫܚܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܦܝܣ
ܒܒܪܢܫ ܕܠܐ ܡܘܕܝܐ ܘܠܒܝܫ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܘܚܝܫܘܬܐ ܩ̈ܝܠܒ
ܚܘܒܠܐ ܕܫܒܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܝܐ: ܘܟܠܠ ܗܘܐ ܦܘܫ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܪܘܚܐ
ܕܒܝ ܢܫܗܘܕ ܠܒܝ܀

3. ܢܛܠܠ ܠܒ ܡܪܝ ܕܐܚܪܐ ܐܩܒܝ ܘܒܪܘܪ ܠܟܒ ܡܢ ܒܩܛܠܒ ܩܝܡ
ܫܡܫܐ ܕܡܒܪ̈ܒ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܚܘܩܝܡ: ܕܐܬܪܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܟܠܠ
ܢܗܝܪ̈ܝ: ܘܟܠܟܡܐ ܟܠܟܡ ܟܠܩ̈ܝܢ. ܕܕܟܡܐ ܐܝܟ ܡܟܝ
ܒܒ̈ܦܠܒ ܫܘܒܚܗ ܕܡܪܝ ܐܬܢܦܠܐ: ܘܟܚܕܐܝ ܠܐ ܐܫܬܘܝ.
ܡܛܠܠ ܕܟܠܐ ܠܫܡܟܠܠ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܠܟܦܝ ܕܠܐ ܢܛܦ ܢܫܝܗ
ܡܢ ܗܘܪܐ. ܥܒܘ̈ܩ ܥܝܪ ܒܒ̈ܢܝ ܡܕܝܢܗ ܡܢ ܐܟ̈ܠܡܒ ܢܗܘܪܐ
ܕܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܕܟܒܪ ܡܢ ܐܝܟ ܘܡܟܐܠܐ. ܘܡܕܝܠܐ ܕܐܬܟܠܝ ܒܗ ܡܢ
ܗܘܪܐ ܙܡܝܐ ܕܝܬܐ ܠܟܘܫܡܗ: ܒܡ ܕܢܒܪܒ ܡܢ ܒܒܠܝ
ܒܝܢܗ ܫܡܫܐ ܗܘܐ: ܦܠܠܝ ܢܪܐܠܐܗ ܘܒܝܪܘܡ ܕܦܠܝܠ ܒܝܢܗ
ܕܫܡܫܐ ܪܒܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܒܟ̈ܠܡܐ ܒܟܠܐ܀

4. As regards speaking about the manner of God's revelation in sanctified minds, it is not permitted to the tongue. But the explanation of this great mystery is placed in purified and luminous minds and it is immersed in silence, because it is in this place of wonder that God makes himself known to those who love Him. He amazes them with his beauty, and with wonder He silences their movements by the vision of his mysteries. Because this place of marvelous visions is the place of amazement, it is also enclosed with a wall of silence. And when the mind wants to attempt to bring the mystery out from there to the place of words and examine it, the mind is confronted with the boundary of silence and becomes silent.
5. The place whose language is silence, how will its mysteries be explained? And since the mysteries amaze the inhabitants of the place in silence, if they are revealed to those who are not accustomed, they will stand in astonishment, deprived of all movement and feeling. The name of the place is "wonder," and the explanation of its mysteries is also "amazement." But if it is fitting for speech to name it, it is a silence without movement and without any designation. It astonishes its inhabitants with its splendor and establishes them in its wonder and bathes those who see it with its inexplicable sweetness. May the bold then be restrained by silence and be bridled with the muzzle of stillness. Since now my tongue is numbed by the chill of my evil deeds and not able to declare the blessings of the partakers of God's mysteries, I take refuge in mercy so as to seek your favor, O treasurer of mysteries, who dwells in the place of silence and shines with the splendours of the One who is concealed, who grants the vision of his glory to those who love Him.

4. ܕܢܐܡܪ ܕܝܢ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܡܛܠ ܛܝܒܘܬܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܥܒܕܐ ܡܥܒܕܢܝܬܐ:
ܠܟܠܢܫ ܠܐ ܐܬܦܫܩ. ܐܠܐ ܚܣܝܪ ܦܘܡܐ ܗܪܐ ܕܒܥܒܕܐ ܕܩܠܝܠ
ܘܫܘܬܦܐ: ܘܡܬܥܒܕ ܒܥܠܡܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܒܐܪܥܐ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܡܛܠ
ܠܐܠܗܐ ܠܒܢܝܢܫܐ: ܘܠܗܘܢ ܒܦܘܪܩܢܗ ܡܠܟܘܬܗ: ܘܒܝܕܥܬܐ
ܡܦܠܚ ܘܠܒܢܝܗܘܢ ܒܚܘܒܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܗܘܐ
ܕܚܘܒܐ ܠܐܢܫܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܥܠܡ: ܐܦ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܦܪܩ ܠܗܘ
ܕܥܒܕܐ ܘܡܢ ܦܠܚ ܡܥܒܕܐ ܕܐܢܫܐ ܠܦܘܫܩܐ ܡܢ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܪܐ ܠܐܬܪܐ
ܕܩܠܐ ܘܢܨܪܘܢ: ܕܢܬܠܝܕ ܒܗ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܕܥܒܕܐ ܘܢܬܠܝܘܢ ❖

5. ܘܐܬܪܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܗܘ ܠܟܠܗ: ܬܪܐܘܗܝ ܒܟܠܐ ܡܬܩܪܝܢ. ܘܐܝ
ܠܒܢܝܢܫܐ ܕܐܬܪܐ: ܬܪܐܘܗܝ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܡܬܩܪܝܢ: ܒܟܠ
ܡܬܒܪܐ ܒܗ ܐܝ ܡܛܠܒܢܝܢ ܗܘܘ. ܒܐܢܫܐ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܠܒܢܝܢ
ܡܢܝܢܝܢ ܗܘܘ: ܡܢ ܟܠ ܕܒܥܠ ܘܦܪܫܬܐ. ܘܐܬܪܐ ܕܢܝܢܗ
ܘܡܬܩܪܐ ܗܘ: ܐܦ ܦܘܡܐ ܬܪܐܘܗܝ ܠܡܫܐ ܗܘ. ܘܐܝ ܙܕܩ ܕܡܬܠܠ
ܢܦܫܗ ܠܗܘ: ܥܠܡܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܕܒܥܠ ܘܕܠܐ ܒܗܢܝ. ܡܬܥܠܝܐ
ܠܒܢܝܢܫܐ ܒܡܘܒܠܗ: ܘܡܢܝܢ ܕܬܪܘܗܝ ܒܥܠܡܗ ܘܙܕܩ
ܢܬܩܪܘܢ ܒܫܘܠܛܢܗ ܕܠܐ ܦܘܡܐ. ܡܢܝܢ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܢܬܠܠ
ܡܪܢܐ: ܘܒܡܐܬܐ ܕܥܒܕܐ ܢܬܒܥܝܢ. ܘܡܬܒܠܠ ܕܒܥܠܝ ܒܝܫܘܕ
ܒܦܘܪܩܐ ܕܒܢܝܩܐ: ܘܢܨܪܘܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ ܕܒܢܝ ܬܪܐܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܠܐ
ܡܬܒܝܢ: ܒܪܢܫܐ ܡܛܠܦܘܣ ܐܝܟ. ܕܐܬܢܝ ܡܢܝ ܒܫܪܒܪܐ
ܕܬܪܐܘܗܝ ܓܒܪܐ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܥܒܕܐ: ܘܐܦܐ ܒܝܡܢܝ ܒܫܘܠܛܐ ܢܬܒܥܠ
ܚܝܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܬܗ ܠܒܢܝܢܫܐ ❖

6. Bestow on me the prayer of mercy, that although I be a stranger to the blessing, I may not depart from the mountain of salvation and become fodder for that fire of Sodom which destroys the wicked.[4] Our father, pray for me, I ask you with tears, because I bend my head in shame from this. And the tongue of my intelligence is muzzled by the confident and familiar intercession of those who love. My feet are lame from having walked without protection; they were bloodied on the stumbling-blocks of the Evil One, and they were bruised in the snares of those who seek out wickedness. Since the light of my eyes was removed from me through my wicked deeds, and I was not able to see these things—prepare for me the compassion of your prayer as a healing for my bruises. And may your mind, whose movements are illumined by the meditation which sees all, visit me in my grief. May Our Lord grant me to be worthy of the blessing to perceive you in feeling, even if I am otherwise blind.
7. Do not blame me for being stupid like a fool. May the blessing of the eye of your heart, which gazes on hidden things, cover over my evil deeds.

[4] cf. Gen. 19:24.

6. ܢܦܩ ܠܗ ܙܒܢܐ ܕܪܒܝܥܐ. ܕܐܦ ܠܛܘܒܐ ܡܣܟܐ ܐܢܐ: ܡܢ
ܛܘܪܐ ܕܡܘܙܒܐ ܠܐ ܐܬܪܚܩ: ܘܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܬܥܘܟܒܬܐ ܠܟܘܪܐ ܗܘ
ܣܘܥܪܢܬܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܐ ܟܘܠܐ. ܐܟܘ ܙܠܐ ܠܟܠ ܡܣܬܝܣ ܐܢܐ
ܠܟ ܒܩܕܡܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܙܒܢ ܦܪܡ ܪܚܡ ܟܢܘܬܐ ܡܢ
ܗܘܐ. ܘܠܟܠܗ ܠܟܡ ܡܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܦܫܛܐ ܕܐܘܟܠܐ
ܘܦܐܪܘܫܝܐ ܕܪܚܡܐ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܩܪܝܢ ܡܢ ܗܠܟܬܐ ܕܠܐ
ܡܛܠ. ܐܬܪܥܝܢ ܠܗܘܡܟܬܐ ܕܒܥܠܐ: ܘܐܬܬܟܪܢ ܒܥܩܠܐ ܕܪܕܝܢ
ܚܘܠܐ. ܒܕܘܗܪܐ ܕܒܢܝ ܟܝܢ ܪܘܡܝܢ ܡܢܝ ܐܬܪܚܩ.
ܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܐܫܟܚ ܠܡܣܪܐ. ܦܩܕ ܠܗ ܚܝܠܐ ܕܙܒܢܟ.
ܐܫܘܬܐ ܠܚܒܪܝܢ. ܘܡܕܝܢ ܢܘܪ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܟܕ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܚܪܐ
ܠܟܠܐ. ܢܫܟܪܢ ܠܒܥܬܝ. ܢܛܠ ܠܗ ܡܪܝ ܕܐܫܬܐܠ
ܠܛܘܒܐ ܕܚܙܝܟ ܒܪܝܫܬܐ: ܐܦ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܫܡܥܬ ܐܢܐ܀
7. ܕܐܬܟܠܠܬ ܐܝܟ ܫܠܡܐ ܠܐ ܐܬܪܚܩ: ܛܘܒܐ ܠܗ ܠܚܝܐ ܕܠܟܝ ܕܢܟܠܬ
ܒܫܢܬܐ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܟܝܢܬܐ܀

LETTER 2

[To another Elder]

1. The beauty of your love is marvelous, concealing what is shameful. Your love has not rejected the one who turned from the abhorrent world and cast it off and threw it from him as one who could not bear the sight of it and its wicked ways, lest he be defiled by the world. But perhaps your mind did not descend from the exalted place, which is near the Most High, to search in a dark place to know my shady ways. Or rather has your mind taken on the resemblance of the great Sun of all the worlds, to make the splendors of his grace give light to those sitting in darkness? But because I am not able to repay these things which your grace did for my wickedness, may the Good One repay you by his visits with gifts of all which your soul desires: these things whose desire is not fleeting. Amen.
2. You remind me: "Do not forget me, lest I go astray"; and "If I forget you, then I will be truly an errant one." But this refuge of yours is feeble and its meaning has been taken off in captivity by a captor—and not the One who captivates his own by his beauty, as you said. However I believe that what you desire will be given to me by Him who promised He would not delude the wish of whoever desires what is good.[1]
3. My right hand is not able to describe in figures the One who represents all form. Take away everything from before you, that He who is hidden within everything might be found alone in your vision. Blessed is the one from before whose view earth—his mother—has been taken away, and in the Father of his soul for its duality there will be a journey in simplicity.

[1] cf. Matt. 7:9–11; Lk. 9:11–13.

ܕܬܪ̈ܬܝܢ ܕܒܘܠܐ ܫܫܠܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ.

1. ܒܡܫܬܘܕܪܘ ܒܣܘܦܪܗ ܕܝܘܡܝ ܡܣܟܢܐ ܡܪܚܡܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܕܪ̈ܐ ܒܗ
ܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܟܠ ܒܒܝܬܐ ܕܕܪܐ ܐܬܕܪ. ܘܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܢܐ ܚܙܬܗ
ܘܗܘܦܟ̈ܘܗܝ ܬ̈ܡܝܗܐ܆ ܐܠܐ ܣܕܪܘܗܝ ܡܢܗ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܒܗ ܠܐ
ܢܬܛܥܐ. ܐܠܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܠܐ ܐܬܚܙܝܬ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܡܪܚܡܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ
ܪܡܐ܆ ܒܡܣܡܣ ܒܬܪܐ ܚܣܘܕܐ ܒܡܪܕ ܗܘܦܟ̈ܝ ܚܣ̈ܘܕܐ. ܐܘ
ܕܘܡܝܐ ܢܣܒ ܒܗ ܕܡܣܡܐ ܪܒܐ ܕܟܠ ܒܒ̈ܝܬܐ܆ ܒܡܕܝܢܗ
ܕܡ̈ܠܝܢ ܬܝܒܘܬܗ ܒܟܠ ܡܠ̈ܟܝ ܚܣܘܕܐ. ܐܠܐ ܡܛܠ ܕܒܟܠ
ܒܝ ܕܐܦܪܘܩ ܗܒܠܝ ܕܬܝܒܘܬܝ ܦܬܪܐ ܒܗܘܐ ܒܣܘܬܝ܆
ܢܦܪܘܩ ܬܝܒܐ ܗܒܘܪܘܬܗ ܒܫܘܘܒܐ ܒܟܠ ܕܪ̈ܫܐ ܢܦܫܝ
ܕܪ̈ܫܐܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܚܒܪܐ ܐܡܝܢ܀

2. ܦܘܡܝ ܐܢܐ ܒܝ ܕܠܐ ܐܬܒܝܢ܆ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܦܠ. ܘܐܦ ܒܟܝ ܬܦܠ ܐܢܐ.
ܬܦܠ ܐܢܐ ܢܬܠܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܒܘܫܝ ܗܘܐ܆ ܘܒܦܬܒܐ
ܕܒܝܬ ܗܘܝܢ ܒܡܒܢܝܬܐ. ܘܒܗ ܒܦܬܐ ܒܪܟܘܗ ܒܡܘܦܪܗ
ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪܬ. ܐܠܐ ܡܘܣܡܢ ܐܢܐ ܕܡܬܒܘܒܐ ܒܝ ܪܫܠܝ ܗܘܐ܆
ܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܗܘܕ ܘܠܐ ܬܦܠܡ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܫܐ ܠܦܬܝܬܐ܀

3. ܠܐ ܡܣܡܝܢܐ ܢܣܒܝܢ ܒܡܪܕ ܙܪܪ ܒܟܠ ܒܚܘܪܐ ܒܪ̈ܘܚܬܐ. ܐܘܕܥ ܒܟܠ
ܡܢ ܡܕܡܝܢ܆ ܕܗܘ ܕܒܪܫܗ ܡܢ ܒܟܠ ܓܫܐ ܒܚܘܕ ܢܣܓܝܢ
ܒܚܝܠܝ. ܬܘܒܘܗܝ ܒܦܡ ܕܐܬܬܪܡܣ ܡܢ ܡܕܡ ܚܙܬܗ ܐܪܒܐ
ܢܒܕܬܗ܆ ܘܒܢܒܘܕܐ ܕܢܣܡܗ ܒܒܣܒܣܘܬܗ ܦܣܬܬܗ ܠܐܕܘܬܐ
ܡܪܕܝܬܐ܀

4. O mystery, wonder[2] makes marvelers of those who walk in the light of the Lord in a clear and beautiful place! Where has everything gone from before me so that only the Lord of all is visible? Where I am I do not know, because my heart is ravished by the beauty of the Beautiful One.
5. Blessed is the one who embraces You and even when asleep inhales your sweet fragrance. Blessed is the one who sits and watches your splendors united to him like the sun's rays to its sphere. Blessed is the one who sees his food changed into your likeness, who tastes it with his palate and it is changed into the delight of your sweetness. Blessed is the one who sees You mingled with his drink and he drinks and his heart exults in your favor. Blessed is the one who enters within himself and sees You in a wonderful vision and he marvels at the beauty of your wondrous mysteries which spring up from within him.

[2] The process of ecstasy begins with astonishment or wonder (*tehrâ*) and leads to helpless amazement or stupor (*témhâ*). *Tehrâ* sometimes indicates movement and *témhâ* the point of arrival where the spirit is without movement in the fulfillment of desire. The roots of wonder lie deep in Syriac tradition. Isaac quotes Theodore of Mopsuestia that *tehrâ* about God is the "unique science," see Homily 40 in P. Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus Ninivita de Perfectione Religiiosa* (Paris/Leipzig, 1909), 304. Ephrem is constantly amazed in wonder at the Incarnation and at the Eucharist, but also at all the created world as both Scripture and the natural world are revelatory. Wonder as described by John is perhaps even more symbolic than the use made of it by Ephrem, but they both see wonder as a revelation of the New World. See S. P. Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 43–44. For further discussion see Letter 12.

4. ܐܘ̄ ܪܐܙܐ ܡܟܣܝ ܠܥܘܪܐ ܒܒܘܠܒܘܠܐ܂ ܡܗܘܟ̈ܒ ܒܠܗܘܪܐ ܡܕܢܚܐ ܐܪܥܐ ܫܡܝܐ ܘܫܦܝܪܐ. ܠܐܝܟܐ ܐܙܠܬ ܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܩܕܡܝ܂ ܘܡܪܐ ܟܠܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܚܙܐ. ܘܐܝܟܐ ܐܝܬܝܟ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܕܫܓܐ ܠܟܠܢ ܒܫܘܦܪܗ ܕܫܦܝܪܐ܀

5. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܚܙܝ ܘܕܩܝ ܘܫܡܥܗ ܒܪܘܚ ܗܝܠܐ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܝܕܥ ܘܚܙܐ ܕܡܚܝ̈ܐ ܕܡܢܚܝܢ ܒܗ܂ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܠܝܬ ܫܡܫܐ ܒܐܣܦܪܗ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܚܙܝܗܝ ܠܐܘܒܠܗ ܡܦܫܠܦ ܠܕܡܘܬܝ܂ ܘܛܒܥܗ ܒܝܕܗ ܘܐܫܬܠܦ ܠܒܘܫܡ ܚܠܘܬܝ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܒܡ ܫܡܗ ܚܕܐ ܕܚܠܒܛ ܐܠܐ܂ ܘܐܫܠܡ ܘܕܪܐ ܠܟܒܗ ܒܪܚܡܬܝ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܫܠܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܡܫܗ ܘܒܕܝ܂ ܚܝܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ܂ ܘܛܥܡ ܒܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܪܐܙܝ ܠܗܘܪܐ ܕܢܒܥ ܡܢ ܟܦܗ܀

6. My heart now is moved against the pen: I will break it because it is not able to describe here the wondrous beauties, for I see streams of living waters[3] flowing from the fount of blessings. And although they spring forth, they are covered with silence and are hidden. Do not find fault with me for being seized with folly here from the bubbling up of the wine which gladdens all, and for having forgotten what is mine. Every mind full of speech who enters this place is stopped from speech by silence, and from movements by astonishment over the mysteries. Here God shows his beauty to those who love Him. Here the soul sees itself and Christ who appears in it, and it rejoices in the vision of Him. Here it sees the marvelous beauties of the angels who stand in wonder before the glory of the One who lives eternally. Here the Holy Trinity is shown mysteriously and its Hypostases appear to the naked mind. Great is this mystery which is only seen by a limpid mind! Here the world to come is shown to the dead in Christ[4] in a mystery: this is God revealing Himself, World of worlds, New World,[5] the Creator of worlds who is a place for his rational creature. The Word is its food and his Drink its rejoicing; his Sun, its sun; his Garment, its clothing;[6] his Vision, its sight; his Knowledge, its understanding. By grace, his Likeness is its likeness:[7] the creature in its Creator sees itself as its Creator.

[3] cf. Jn. 7:38.

[4] cf. 1 Thess. 4:16.

[5] New World (*ʿâlmâ ḥadtâ*): Mt. 19:28, Peshitta. The phrase occurs in the Odes of Solomon 33:12 and in Aphrahat, Demonstration 12:2. The image is especially common in the writings of John the Solitary who interprets the whole history of salvation and the nature of the spiritual life according to this hope in the New World. If after baptism one remains in a state of spiritual growth, one is already in the new life of the New World. See Bruce Bradley, "Jean le Solitaire," *DSpir* 8 (1974): 764–772. The phrase is found frequently in Isaac of Nineveh, for references see Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, ch. 5.5. In addition to its occurrences in John of Dalyatha's Letters, see also his Discourse 12, "On the mystery of the New World," Vat. 124, 328a–329b.

[6] On the use of clothing imagery to speak of the Incarnation, see S. P. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," ed. M. Schmidt *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Eichstätter Beiträge 4, Regensburg, 1982), 11–40.

[7] On the relation of image and likeness to the Prototype and the role of grace in this transformation, see Letter 29.

6. ܐܬܐܙܪܘ ܠܟܘܢ ܗܟܝܠ ܟܠܐ ܚܝܠܐ ܐܬܒܪܢܘܗܝ: ܟܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܣܡܟܝܢ
ܗܘܝܬ ܕܒܙܘܢ ܣܘܦܪܐ ܠܗܘܢܐ: ܕܢܗܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܚܝܐ ܕܡܢ
ܦܪܘܫ ܛܘܒܐ ܕܗܢ. ܘܡܢ ܕܢܣܒ ܡܦܩܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܘܡܫܒܚܝܢ.
ܠܐ ܠܒܙܘܝܬ ܕܢܩܘܬܐ ܐܬܕܒܪܘ ܗܘܝܬ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܗ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ
ܟܠܐ. ܘܛܒܝܢ ܠܒܝܬܐ. ܟܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܫܒܝܩ ܡܫܟܚܬܐ ܕܒܠܐ
ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘܬ: ܐܬܒܟܝ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܡܢ ܡܫܟܚܬܐ ܘܙܘܥܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܕܐܬܪܐ. ܗܘܝܬ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܣܘܦܪܗ ܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܗ. ܗܘܝܬ ܢܗܝܪܐ
ܢܫܡܐ ܒܫܘܟܪܗ: ܘܒܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܕܒܝܩ ܒܗ ܘܡܦܪܩ ܠܗ
ܒܚܝܠܗ. ܗܘܝܬ ܢܗܝܪܐ ܣܘܦܪܐ ܠܗܘܢܐ ܕܡܠܐܟܐ: ܕܦܩܡܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܕܣܘܒܪܐ ܕܢܣ ܒܒܝܬܐ. ܗܘܝܬ ܠܒܝܬܐ ܡܩܕܫܬܐ ܒܙܘܐܐ
ܡܠܝܢܘܬܐ: ܘܒܗܘܝܐ ܒܙܘܒܢܐ ܡܠܘܫܝܢ ܡܫܒܚܝܢ. ܐܦ ܗܘ
ܐܬܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܒܗܘܝܐ ܣܝܡܐ ܒܟܢܫܗ ܡܫܒܚܐ. ܗܘܝܬ ܒܟܢܫܐ
ܕܒܢܝ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܒܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܙܐܐ ܡܠܝܢܘܬܐ. ܗܘ ܕܝܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ
ܡܫܒܚܐ. ܒܟܠ ܒܟܢܫܝܢ ܒܟܢܫܐ ܚܕܐ. ܒܪܐ ܒܟܢܫܐ ܐܬܪܐ
ܠܒܝܬܗ ܡܩܕܫܬܐ. ܡܛܠ ܐܘܟܠܗ. ܘܫܡܫܗ ܚܕܘܬܗ.
ܫܡܫܗ ܫܡܫܗ. ܠܟܘܫܗ. ܚܝܠܗ ܚܕܘܬܗ.
ܕܟܠܗ ܡܫܒܚܢܗ. ܘܡܘܬܗ ܒܛܒܘܬܐ. ܒܟܢܫܬܐ
ܒܟܘܠܗ ܟܘܠܗ ܢܗܝܪܐ ܠܟܘܠܗ܀

7. Everyone who finds these things finds the anticipated resurrection,[8] and all those who do not see them are still among the dead.

[8] cf. Eph. 2:16; Col. 2:12. The mystical life is seen by John as an "anticipated resurrection," fruit of baptism and Eucharist, making it clear how inappropriate is any charge of Messalianism. See Letters 4:7; 15:9; 47:4.

7. ܟܠܠ ܕܐܒ̈ܗܝܢ ܒ̈ܢܝܢ: ܐܒ̈ܗܝܢ ܡܫܒܚܬܐ ܡܦܪܫܬܐ. ܘܟܠܠ
ܕܒ̈ܢܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܕܘ: ܒܕܟܠܠ ܟܢܫ ܡܬܬܠܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗܘܢ܀

LETTER 3

[To a brother who once was his friend
but afterwards obeyed the Evil One and turning, reviled him.]

1. I greatly rejoice in reproaches and I count insults advantages. But you are saying: "So then why do you blame me for abusing you?" Listen, and I will tell you. For Our Lord has said: *I have a baptism with which I am to be baptized and I am anxious for its accomplishment.*[1] That is: "I am ready to die and I await burial." But it was not right for Judas, his friend, to betray Him.

[1] Lk. 12:50.

ܕܠܟܠ܆ ܕܒܥܐ ܐܚܐ ܚܕ ܕܒܪܟ ܦܫܩܘܗ ܗܘܐ܆
ܘܒܬܪ ܐܫܬܡܥ ܠܟܢܫܐ ܘܗܦܟ ܡܪܝܐ ܠܗ.

1. ܠܒ ܚܕܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܨܘܪܬܐ. ܘܠܥܒܕܝ̈ܟ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܚܫܟ ܐܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܬ ܕܡܕܡ ܡܢܐ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܝ ܘܡܪܝܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ. ܫܡܥܬ ܐܦ ܐܢܬ ܘܐܡܪ ܠܟ. ܡܢܘ ܗܢܐ ܐܡܪ. ܕܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܝ ܕܐܫܡܥ܆ ܘܠܓܠܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܠܫܘܥܒܕܗ. ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܐܢܐ ܘܡܫܡܫܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܪܝܐ. ܒܪܡ ܠܗ ܠܟܘܪܕܐ ܘܥܡܗ ܐܪܡ ܗܘܐ ܕܢܫܠܡܝܗܘܢ܀

LETTER 4

[To one of the solitaries]

1. Your title, my brother, is higher than your lineage. May your conduct also become like to those for whom you are named, so that your body might shine forth in its purity as also the solitaries shine by means of their purity. May your soul be freed of passionate thoughts. And as the solitaries are a burning fire, searching unceasingly for God, likewise may your gaze be unceasingly towards Him with his incessant praise in your heart so that your soul might take on the likeness of the solitaries.
2. Deprive yourself of food a little, but abstain completely from the company of men, especially those who are not diligent, so that despicable desire may be quenched within you. These are the sticks of our enemy with which he kindles this fire which is wickedly inflamed: contact with seculars, conversation with women, affection for young people whether of the world or those of one's own way of life. This last evil, for the servant of Christ, is worse than all the other evils, with its wicked companion, that is, friendship with the daughters of the Covenant.[1] The mother of all this brood of vipers is gluttony, together with the fellowship of brothers whose lives are void of ministry. When our soul is stripped of these it can no longer fall into the snares of the enemy and is able to fly swiftly to God and be saved in Him.[2] Even the body itself forgets its impure desire when it is deprived of these things, and though it stirs naturally in the body, the desire fades away without a struggle.

[1] Daughters of the Covenant: *qyâmâ* is a term rich in meanings including "covenant" and "resurrection." It refers to men and women who live a consecrated life. The concept, with roots in Aphrahat and in Ephrem, is characteriestic of the early Syriac Church. See S. H. Griffith, "Monks, 'Singles' and the 'Sons of the Covenant,' Reflections on Syriac Ascetic Terminology," in *Evlogema: Studies in Honor of Robert Taft* (Rome: 1993), 141–160.

[2] cf. Ps. 124:7.

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ܕܐܪܘܥܐ ܕܒܗܠܐ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܐܢ̈ܫܐ ܚܣܝܕܐ.

1. ܫܡܥܘܢ ܐܝܟ ܓܒܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܢ ܛܘܗܘܡܝܢ. ܘܐܦ ܕܡܒܪܝܢ ܢܗܘܐ
ܡܫܡܫܢܗ ܠܒܪܘܢ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܐܬܟܒܫ. ܕܗܘܐ ܙܡܝܢ ܦܓܪܢ
ܒܢܡܘܣܗ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ ܐܒܗܝ ܟܝܢ ܕܒܢܝܘܗܝ. ܘܢܩܫܝܢ
ܬܗܘܐ ܡܪܓܠܐ ܡܢ ܚܘܫܒܐ ܚܫܝܠܐ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ ܐܬܚܝܠܘ
ܢܘܪܐ ܢܩܕܬ: ܒܢܘܪܐ ܐܟܝܠܐ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ. ܗܟܝܠ ܗܘܐ ܐܟܢ ܚܪ̈ܝܢ
ܐܦ ܕܢܟܝܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܒܢ ܠܟܘܠܚܢܗ ܕܒܠܒܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܦܫܩ:
ܕܠܐܫܒܩ ܢܩܫܝܢ ܕܘܟܝܐ ܕܢܠܗܘܢ܀

2. ܠܠܘܬ ܢܩܫܝܢ ܡܬܠܠܐ ܡܢ ܫܒܪ̈ܬܐ ܘܡܬܟܠܬܐ ܡܢ ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܐ.
ܘܡܬܪܐܬܐ ܡܢ ܠܐ ܒܥܕܪܐ: ܕܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܫܝܢ ܦܪܫܬܐ ܡܫܡܫܢܬܐ.
ܗܟܝܢ ܐܬܚܙܝܘ ܡܢܩܘܗܝ ܕܒܟܠܕܪ̈ܝ. ܕܦܠܓܪ ܒܗܘܢ
ܒܢܘܪܐ ܗܘܐ ܢܩܕܬ ܟܘܠܠܗ. ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܒܟ̈ܬܒܐ. ܡܫܡܠܠܐ
ܕܒܗܘܢ ܢܩܫ. ܚܘܒܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܛܟ̈ܣܐ. ܠܝ ܕܒܟܬܒܐ ܘܠܝ ܕܒܢ̈ܝ ܕܘܒܪܐ.
ܠܬܪ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܒܝܩ: ܗܘܐ ܒܝܫܐ ܠܟܘܠܚܢܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܒܗܘܢ
ܚܒܪܬܗ ܙܡܝܢܬܐ. ܗܢܘܢ ܕܝܢ ܙܚܡܘܬܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܡܢܝܢܐ. ܘܐܝܟ
ܕܒܗܘܢ ܗܟܝܢ ܡܬܒܪܐ ܢܦܘܫܬܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܒܪܫܐ. ܒܗܘܢ ܚܒܪܘܬܐ
ܕܐܢ̈ܫܐ ܒܛܝܒܘܬ ܡܢ ܦܘܠܚܢ ܚܝ̈ܘܗܘܢ. ܒܪ ܡܢ ܗܟܝܢ
ܠܦܬܟܪܢ ܢܩܫ: ܒܡܪܬܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܒܟܠܕܪ̈ܐ ܠܡܫܩܠܠ ܠܒܬ
ܠܒܪ. ܘܡܬܟܠܬܐ ܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܠܒܗܬܐ ܠܠܗܐ ܘܒܗ ܠܐܦܪܐ.
ܘܐܦ ܗܘ ܦܓܪܐ ܛܒܐ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܗܘܐ ܛܡܐܐ: ܒܪ ܡܢ ܗܟܝܢ
ܢܫܒܩ. ܘܐܦ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܒܝܫܘܬܐ: ܕܠܐ ܒܡܠܐ ܢܡܘܬ܀

3. I beg you, my brother, keep these admonitions of your friend. For our way of life is not casual but resembles that of the exalted Watchers.[3] Much sleep darkens the mind so that it does not distinguish these things. Watchfulness makes it a companion to the Seraphim and a stranger to human contact, while the desire of God is continually burning in it.
4. For as long as the passions are in the soul, O brother, a person is a city to himself full of the tumult of many people wherever he is. This is what David called *city*[4] and for deliverance from it he took refuge in the desert,[5] that is to say, liberation from passions. When a person separates from passions as from the city, then he finds the confidence to say to God: "*Henceforth who is my hope if not You, Lord.*"[6] And when the Good One sees that he abstains from everything, He makes him hear a voice gladdening and consoling: "*Take courage! Take courage! I will not forsake you again and I will not leave you. And wherever you go, I am with you.*"[7] And when he who was sitting in lamentation heard these things, childlike he cried out as a baby who has sensed his parent and says: "*Abba! Abba! Abba!*"[8]—in these moments only this is possible for him.

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[3] The Syriac tradition frequently designates angels as Watchers (Daniel 4:13, 17). Sometimes the term means angel, other times one of the Cherubim and Seraphim. Watchers figure prominently in the pseudepigraphic and later Jewish mystical literature. In Merkabah texts such as 3 Enoch they are a separate order: "Above all these are four great princes called Watchers…their abode is opposite the throne of glory…they receive glory from the glory of the Almighty and are praised with the praise." See 3 Enoch 28:1–3.

[4] 2 Sam. 5:9.

[5] 2 Sam. 15:23.

[6] Ps. 39:7.

[7] Dt. 31:6-8.

[8] Rom. 8:15.

3. ܛܪ ܐܚܝ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܗܘ̈ܝ ܪ̈ܢܝܢ ܟܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܟ. ܠܗ ܓܝܪ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܗܘ ܕܟܢܝ܆ ܐܠܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܗܘ ܕܥܒ̈ܕܝ ܙ̈ܘܥܐ. ܚܛܝܬܐ ܣܓܝܐܬܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܠܗ ܠܗܘܢܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܩܪܘܣ. ܒܥܝܪܘܬܐ ܦܘܬܐ ܠܡܫܪ̈ܦܐ ܟܒܕܐ ܠܗ܆ ܘܡܥܒܪܢܐ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܚܘܠܡܢ ܐܝܡܐ. ܘܪܓܬܐ ܕܥܠܝܗ̇ ܥܠܝܡܘܬܗ ܡܬܒܪܝܐ ܒܗ܀

4. ܟܡܐ ܓܝܪ ܕܣܓܝ ܒܥܡܠܐ ܐܬܚܫܒܘܢ ܐܘ̄ ܐܚܝ܆ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܐܬܠܗܘܢ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܠܡܐܬܘܗܝ܆ .ܣܓܝܐܐ ܕܟܡܐ ܣܓܝܐܐ ܟܠܐ ܒܪ ܕܐܬܠܘܗܝ. ܘܗܕܐ ܗܘ ܕܕܘܝܕ ܡܪܝܐ ܡܫܡܗܘ܆ ܘܠܟܘܪܝܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܒܡܕܒܪܐ ܡܬܓܫܡ. ܗܘܢ ܕܝܢ ܒܚܪܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܚܛܐ. ܡܐ ܕܐܬܠܘܝܒ ܠܗ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܡܢ ܚܛܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܡܪܝܐ܆ ܗܘܝܘ ܡܫܡܫ ܦܐܪܘܣܝܐ ܠܘܬ ܐܠܗܐ ܠܡܐܡܪ܆ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܡܢܗ ܣܥܪ ܐܠܐ ܠܝ ܐܝܬ ܡܪܝܐ. ܘܡܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܫܡܝܐ ܕܐܬܠܘܝܒ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ܆ ܦܫܝܫܝܢ ܠܗ ܟܠܐ ܡܢܕܡܐ ܘܡܬܟܬܒܐ. ܐܬܢܣܠܐ ܐܬܢܣܠܐ. ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܐܡܚܣܢ. ܘܠܐ ܐܪܦܐ ܒܟ ܐܬܩܝܐ. ܘܟܠܟܠܐ ܒܪ ܕܐܬܝܠܝܬ ܒܟܢ ܐܬܐ. ܘܡܐ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܗܠܝܢ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܬܒ ܟܠܐ܆ ܡܒܪܬܐ ܐܢ ܕܠܗܘܐ ܕܐܪܓܫ ܒܢܠܗܘܢ ܦܠܐ ܘܐܡܪ. ܐܝܠܐ ܐܝܠܐ. ܗܕܐ ܒܚܝܕ ܡܫܬܝܚܐ ܠܗ ܒܥܒܕܐ ܗܠܝܢ܀

5. From this time forward, limpidity[9] makes him abide in wonder, and grace incessantly stirs up in him impulses which cannot be elaborated: briefly, impulses of the New World, mysteries, revelations, and insights concerning the Godhead which it is not permitted to reveal. Henceforth, he no longer remembers his worldly existence, nor bodily origin, nor human fellowship. The love of the One who brought him forth, the Father of all, gave him forgetfulness of everything by the transformation of his impulses. Those who love are henceforth united to those who love in an ineffable dignity which is a resemblance to the angels of light and fellowship with them. Oh, how amazing is the love which they show to him who thus is mingled[10] with them and who recognizes in them his kindred!

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[9] Limpidity (*šapyûtâ*) or transparency of soul opens one to revelation and entry to the New World. There are two references to it in biblical writings: 4 Esdras 6:32 and Apoc. Baruch 66:1. In the fourth century the term occurs several times in Ephrem. In his Hymns on the Nativity 3.8, he refers the term to Christ. But in the works of John the Solitary (early 5th cent.), one finds very frequent usage of *šapyûtâ*. See *Jean d'Apamée Dialogues et Traités*, trans. R. Lavenant (SC 311, 1984). In the Introduction, Lavenant notes a passage in the writings of John the Solitary where Christ himself is referred to as the model of limpidity. The term also occurs frequently in Isaac of Nineveh, as well as in Joseph Hazzaya, a contemporary of John of Dalyatha. In translating *šapyûtâ*, limpidity has been used almost exclusively here so as not to lose the significance of the term, see G. Bunge, "Le 'lieu de la limpidité': a propros d'un apophthegme enigmatique: Budge II, 494" *Irenikon* 55 (1982): 7–18.

[10] Mingled (from *hlt*) is used by Syriac writers to describe various kinds of close union: of the believer with the Holy Spirit, with Jesus, and even the union of soul and body. John uses it here to describe the relationship between angels and humanity. See also Letters 19 and 31. For the importance of the term in Syriac literature, see Columba Stewart, OSB, *'Working the Earth of the Heart,': The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to AD 431* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 170–203.

5. ܘܗܟܢܐ ܘܒܗܠܠܐ ܦܩܘܕܬܐ ܒܬܡܗܐ ܡܡܝܕܡܐ ܠܗ: ܘܐܘܟܠܐ ܠܐ
ܢܩܘܒ ܐܝܕܐ ܠܒܪܘܟܐ ܠܫܘܒܚܬܐ ܡܕܝܢܐ ܒܗ ܕܠܐ ܦܫܩ.
ܘܗܘܐ ܠܡܬܡܪ: ܢܗܘܐ ܕܒܠܡܐ ܣܝܬܐ ܘܪܘܪܐ ܘܠܟܬܝܠܐ
ܘܗܘܩܠܐ ܕܒܠܐ ܐܬܠܬܐ ܕܠܡܫܠܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܦܫܩ. ܠܐ ܡܒܠܐ
ܚܘܒܗ ܗܦܟܗ ܕܡܢ ܒܒܡܐ. ܘܡܚܝܕܘܬܐ ܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܘܚܒܪܘܬܐ
ܐܠܗܝܬܐ. ܘܫܡܝܢܬܐ ܕܢܟܘܕܗ ܐܟܐ ܕܒܠܐ: ܠܫܘܒܚܬܐ ܕܒܠܐ
ܒܡܘܫܠܦ ܙܩܒܘܗܝ ܡܘܕܠܐ ܠܗ. ܘܢܝܡܐ ܒܪܢܝܡܐ ܐܬܝܢܝܕܘ:
ܒܝܕܘܬܐ ܡܒܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܡܒܠܠܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ ܕܗܘܡܐ ܕܡܬܠܩܝ
ܢܗܘܪܐ ܘܣܒܪܬܐ ܕܒܡܗܘܢ. ܐܘ ܡܐ ܬܡܝܗܐ ܘܢܫܡܬܐ ܕܡܢܝܘܡ
ܠܗܬܗ: ܕܗܘ ܕܗܒܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܬܝܠܗ: ܘܗܕܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܒܢ
ܬܗܘܡܗܘ ܡܫܬܘܕܥܢ܀

6. The pen burns from the strength of your fire, O Jesus, and my right hand has stopped writing; my eyes are scorched by the rays of your beauty. The ground on which I have been proceeding has been altered before me. My intelligence has been astonished by the marvel which You provoke and henceforth I know myself as not existing. A flame has been kindled in my bones,[11] and springs have burst forth to water my flesh all over lest it be consumed. O purifying furnace in which the Craftsman has cleansed his creation! O garment of light which our will has stripped off from us, with which we are now reclothed from within the fire![12] Allow me, my Lord, to give what is holy to your children; I do not give <it> to the dogs, but to those who love You I give the pearls which I bring up from your bosom, O glorious Sea. I do not throw them to the swine lest they be trampled with their feet.[13]

[11] Lam. 1:3.

[12] In the Syriac tradition, fire imagery plays an important role in the context of baptism. And it is at Christian baptism that the garment of light or the robe of glory, lost at the Fall and restored at Christ's baptism, becomes available again to humankind. See S. P. Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, The Syrian Church Series 9 (Poona, 1979), 11–18. See Brock, "Robe of Glory." See also Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 85–97.

[13] cf. Matt. 7:6.

6. ܒܗܝ ܠܗ ܡܢܝܐ ܡܢ ܥܘܡܪܗ ܕܡܘܪܝ ܫܡܥܘܢ܇ ܘܦܫܛ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܡܢ
ܕܠܡܡܠܠܘ. ܐܫܬܠܡ̈ܬ ܒܫ̈ܢܝ ܡܢ ܐܝ̈ܠܝܢ ܡܘܦܪ̈ܝ܇
ܘܐܬܛܝܒܬ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܒܗ ܪܕܐ ܗܘܝܬ. ܐܬܟܬܒܬ ܠܗ
ܡܕܒܪ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܕܒܝ܇ ܘܐܢܐ ܠܝ ܡܛܠܠ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܐܬܠܝ ܢܦܠ
ܐܢܐ. ܣܓܝ ܡܬܟܬܒܢܘܬܐ ܒܟܬ̈ܒܢ܇ ܘܐܬܬܪ̈ܡܢ ܩ̈ܕܝܫܬܐ ܕܢܦܫ
ܠܡܫܪܝ ܒܠܗ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܐܪܝ. ܐܘ̄ ܒܗܪܐ ܡܕܒܪܢܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܕܪܡ
ܥܒܕܬܗ ܐܘܡܢܐ. ܐܘ̄ ܐܫܬܠܠ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܐܡܠܝܟ ܡܢ ܙܒܢܝ܇
ܕܠܡܒܢܝܢ ܠܗ ܗܝܡܢ ܡܢ ܥܢܝ ܢܗܪܐ. ܐܦܫ ܠܝ ܡܪܝ
ܕܐܬܠܠ ܡܘܕܝܢ ܠܡܫܒܚ܇ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܡܫܬ̈ܥܝ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܢܐ.
ܡܬܥܒܝܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܡܥܒܕܢܐ ܠܡܬܢܘܚܝ ܦܫܩܬ ܐܢܐ܇
ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܢܫܠܐ ܠܡܬܥܠ ܚܕܬܐܢܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܪܦܐ ܐܢܐ܀

7. Glory to You! How amazing are your mysteries! Blessed are those who love You because they always glow with your beauty and You make a gift of Yourself to them. This is the anticipated resurrection[14] of the dead in Christ[15] of which the blessed Paul spoke. Blessed are you, O solitaries, because with the Only-Begotten One you have become an only son of God by union with Him.[16] And because of this, mysteries of the Father are revealed to you and boldly you say: "*The mind of Christ is ours*;[17] He has appeared in our hearts and *given light, by the glory of God*.[18] Woe is me who of my own accord have deprived myself of these things and have prepared for myself my portion of darkness in this world."
8. My God, strip me by your grace from the garment of passions—that Gehenna of darkness—and clothe me with the robe of your holy light which is itself the New World, before I go out from the body. Give me, my Lord, as nourishment the beauty of your vision and as a joy-giving beverage give me the revelations of your mysteries hidden in the bosom of your Being. Make me, my Lord, a member in the body of your Only-Begotten that I might experience the mystery of union with You in as much as my weak nature is able.

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[14] cf. Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12.

[15] 1 Thess. 4:16.

[16] Solitary (*îhîdâyâ*) or single one describes a solitary monk as opposed to one living in community. But the term goes beyond celibacy or eremitical life to indicate a unity within the Solitary and his unity with God. In the New Testament *îhîdâyâ* is the Only Begotten Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn. 4:9). And Aphrahat says of Christ: "the Only Begotten (*îhîdâyâ*) Who is from the bosom of his Father shall cause all solitaries (*îhîdâyê*) to rejoice," Demonstration, 6:6. On use of the term in Aphrahat, see Naomi Koltun-Fromm, "Yokes of the Holy-Ones: The Embodiment of a Christian Vocation," *Harvard Theological Review* 94:2 (2001): 205–18. See also T. K. Koonammakkal, "Ephrem's Ideas on Singleness," *Hugoye*: *Journal of Syriac Studies* 2 (1999). And see S. H. Griffith, "'Singles' in God's service: thoughts on the Ihidaye from the works of Aphrahat and Ephrem the Syrian," *Harp* 4 (1991): 145–159.

[17] 1 Cor. 2:16.

[18] 2 Cor. 4:6.

7. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܟܝ ܕܫܡܥܬ ܠܡܫܝܚܝ ܬ̈ܐܪܝ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒ̈ܢܝܡܝܢ
ܕܫܘܦܪܝ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܡܕܪ̈ܫܝ. ܘܐܦ ܠܟܝ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܫܘܡܠܬܐ
ܢܘܒ ܐܝܟ. ܘܗܘܝܐ ܗܝ ܡܫܡܠܝܬܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܬܐ ܘܡܫܒܚܬܐ ܕܒܡܫܝܚܐ
ܕܐܡܪ ܛܘܒܢܐ ܦܘܠܘܣ. ܛܘܒܝܟܝܢ ܐܘ̄ ܚܬ̈ܝܐ܆ ܕܗܘܘܠܘܢ
ܠܟܝܢ ܟܢ ܡܣܒܪܐ ܣܒ ܒܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܕܟܡܗ.
ܘܡܛܠܠ ܗܘܐ ܙ̈ܘܓܗܝܢ ܕܐܒܐ ܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܟܝܢ.
ܘܦܪ̈ܘܫܝܬܐ ܐܡܪܢ ܐܠܗܝ܆ ܘܡܕܒܪܐ ܘܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܝ. ܘܗܘ
ܘܚܝ ܒܟܠܗ ܘܒܗܘ ܒܫܘܒܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܘܢܟܠ ܕܒܪܝܢܢ
ܒܨܠܘܬܐ ܠܟܠܟܘܢ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ܆ ܘܢܬܠܘܢ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܗܪܟܐ
ܛܒܬܐ ܠܟܝܢ܀

8. ܐܠܗܝ ܐܡܪܢ ܡܢܢ ܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܝ ܠܟܘܠܝ ܢܣܐ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ
ܫܘܒܚܬܐ܆ ܘܠܟܠܗܝܢ ܐܬܛܠܠ ܢܗܘܪܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܗܘ ܗܘ
ܡܫܡܗܘ ܕܒܟܠܗܐ ܚܕܬܐ܆ ܡܪܡ ܕܐܦܫ ܡܢ ܦܓܪܐ. ܗܘܒ ܠܟܝ
ܡܪܢ ܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܚܕܬܝ ܠܡܫܘܬܠܬܐ ܘܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܙ̈ܐܪܝ ܕܒܫܝܢ
ܒܟܘܟܒܗ ܕܐܬܠܝܢ ܠܟܫܝܐ ܡܫܪܝܢܐ. ܒܒܪܢܝ ܡܪܝ ܗܘܡܐ
ܒܫܘܡܡܗ ܕܚܣܝܢ ܘܐܦܫܟ ܒܙܐܪܐ ܕܚܘܢܝܗ ܕܒܡܝܢ. ܐܒܡܐ
ܕܦܫܡ ܒܢܝܢ ܢܒܠܬܐ܀

9. Be diligent, my brother, in seeking night and day for the Lord's favor and say thus: "Good Father, bestow on me your favor even if I am not worthy." For by it, affection for all the passions vanishes from the soul: this it is which destroys the enemies and obtains all kinds of gifts from the bosom of the Father. Moreover, this favor is the mother who has brought forth the new mysteries of the New World; for by this favor Christ appears in you and the appearance of your soul shines in Him. Even now He makes you his abode with his Father and his Holy Spirit. Because the desire of Christ, O my brother, will vigorously uproot the desire of the world and its memories from the soul. And the soul will be attached to God alone. To Him be glory from all who love Him[19] and may he gladden us with his love. Amen.

[19] cf. Jn. 14:23.

9. ܐܬܚܦܛ ܐܚܝ ܒܡܐܫܠܐ ܒܠܠܝܐ ܘܒܐܝܡܡܐ ܪܚܡܬܗ ܕܡܪܢ
ܘܗܘܡ ܐܡܪ. ܐܒܐ ܛܒܐ ܦܬܡ ܠܝ ܪܚܡܬܟ ܘܐܦ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܐܠܐ.
ܒܗ ܒܟܢ ܡܬܛܟܣܐ ܕܪ̈ܚܡܐ ܚܝ̈ܐ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܢܦܫܐ. ܗܘ
ܗܘ ܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܒܒܪ̈ܝܬܐ ܘܡܬܚܒܠܢܘܬܐ ܕܟܠ ܡܘܗ̈ܒܢ ܕܡܢ
ܒܥܒܘܗ ܕܐܒܐ. ܐܡܐ ܗܘ ܒܟܢ ܢܟܬܒ ܪ̈ܐܙܐ ܚܕ̈ܬܐ ܕܒܟܠܡܐ
ܚܕܬܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ ܒܗܘܕܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܢܚ ܠܢ܆ ܘܦܪܘܩ ܢܦܫܢ
ܒܗ ܡܬܕܡܪܐ. ܘܐܘܘܠܐ ܕܒܗ ܟܠܢ ܐܢܘܢ ܘܪܘܚܗ ܡܫܬܐ ܡܢ
ܒܪܗ ܝܚܝܕ ܟܠܢ. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܗܘ ܒܟܢ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܢܝܐ
ܐ̄ܘ ܐܚܝ܆ ܕܐܬܢܣܪܝ ܡܢ ܢܦܫܐ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܘܒܟܠܕܘܟܝܢ܆
ܘܒܐܠܗܐ ܒܟܢܘܢ ܐܬܬܩܢܪܝ. ܕܟܠܗ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ
ܪ̈ܚܡܘܗܝ ܘܟܠ ܢܚܐ ܒܪܚܡܬܗ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 5

To whoever hears and obeys, the peace of the Sanctifier!

1. O man of God, hear the words of your friend! No, beloved brother, let us not impose our will on Christ, but we must submit to his will. Do you wish that Christ appear to you in prayer as to his friend? May his love be in you without interruption. Do you desire that this love be constantly inflamed in your soul? Remove the love of the world from it. Do you yearn that your dwelling be in the Place without place, that is, in God? Go out from the world as from the womb.[1] And behold from that time you will see the true World, for Christ is not able to dwell with this world. I beg you, listen to Him when He declares to you: *I am not of this world*;[2] because of this, it chases me from where I dwell. And I am not able to live with it because *it abhors me*.[3] But He continually overshadows[4] the soul and visits it so that, if it be free from the world, He might dwell in it.

[1] One is placed in this world awaiting the world to come and just as a fetus goes out from the womb, so the Christian emerges from the womb of this world into the life of the New World. The same image is found in Philoxenus of Mabbug, Homily 9. 260–269, esp. 262: "And when (the child of man who is born through Baptism)…hath increased and hath grown to the full, according to the measure of his unformed substance in the world, as in the womb, he becometh born again from the world, outside the world, in the same manner as the child is born again from the womb into the world." English translation of Philoxenus as found in *The Discourses of Philoxenus, Bishop of Mabbôgh, A.D. 485–519*, trans. and ed. E. A. Wallis Budge (London, 1893–94) 2 vols. Also John the Solitary uses the image, see Lavenant, *Jean d'Apamée*, 31. Finally Nicholas Cabasilas makes it an important component of his work, see *Nicholas Cabasilas, My Life in Christ*, trans. Margaret Lisney (Worthing, West Sussex: Churchman Publishing, 1989), 4.

[2] Jn. 8:23; 17:14–16.

[3] cf. Jn. 7:7; 15:18.

[4] Overshadows (*aggen*) has its roots in Jewish Aramaic and in the Peshitta. It is also found in many Syriac anaphoras. From its use in the Annunciation narrative, Luke 1:35, one sees that within the Syriac tradition it is a term for divine activity of a salvific nature. See S. P. Brock, "Passover, Annunciation and Epiclesis: Some Remarks on the Term *aggen* in the Syriac Versions of Lk 1:35," *Novum Testamentum* 24 (1982): 224–233. For the use of *aggen* in later spiritual writers, see Letter 13.

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ܕܝܠܗ ܕܢܚܡܗ.ܒܦܓܪܗ ܘܡܫܬܠܡܢܘܬ ܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ܀

1. ܐܘ̄ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ ܡܫܝܢ ܠܡܩ̈ܒܠܢ ܪܚܡܝ. ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܒܝܐ܇
ܠܐ ܢܚܙܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܪܘܚܝ܇ ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܦܠܚܘܢ ܠܪܘܚܢܗ. ܪܒܐ
ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐܝܕܐ ܠܟܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܪܘܟܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܒܪܢܫܗ܇ ܪܚܡܬܗ
ܘܠܐ ܦܩܦܩ ܠܐܒܘܐ ܒܝ. ܟܒܪ ܐܝܟ ܕܗܘܐ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ ܠܡܠܟܘܬܗܘܢ
ܒܢܦܫܝ܇ ܐܦܢ ܡܢܗ ܪܚܡܬ ܒܒܠܝܐ. ܪܚܡܝ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܐܬܪܐ
ܘܠܐ ܐܬܬܪܐ܇ ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܐܠܗܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܗܘܢܝ܇ ܦܘܩ ܡܢ
ܠܒܝܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܒܪܫܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܢܬܐܠܗܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ
ܫܪܪܐ. ܠܐ ܡܫܡܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܡܫܡܥ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܒܝܬܐ. ܟܒܪ ܐܢܐ
ܡܢܝ. ܡܫܡܥܢܘܢ ܒܝ ܡܢܘܐ ܠܟܝ ܘܐܡܪ. ܕܐܢܐ ܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܡܢ
ܠܒܝܬܐ. ܡܬܠܗܘܬܐ ܪܘܦ ܠܟܘܢ ܡܢ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܡܪ܇ ܘܠܐ ܡܫܡܥ
ܐܢܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܡܢܗ ܡܬܠܠ ܕܦܬܐ ܠܟܘܢ. ܐܡܝܢܐܝܬ ܦܬܓܡܐ ܪܒܐ
ܢܦܫܐ ܘܦܬܪ ܠܗܘܢ܇ ܕܐ̄ ܗܦܝܟܐ ܡܢ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܢܡܡܪ ܒܗܘܢ܀

2. Do you desire to see reflections of the beauty of the Holy Trinity in your soul? Keep the commandments of Christ. For He says that: "When you keep my commandments, my love is found in you."[5] And at their fulfillment[6] in the soul He says that He will come and make an abode with his Father and his Spirit[7] and there He will dwell and show Himself.[8] Also of his friends He says that they are not of this world and that the world hates them[9]. Because the fulfillment of the commandments is the Cross, that is, ignorance and forgetfulness of the world's pleasure,[10] and eager longings and earnest desire for departure in the heat of love, as with St. Paul.[11] With confidence towards my God, as one who trusts, I say indeed that when the mind strips off the world, it puts on Christ; with its turning away from concern for the world's affairs, it meets God; with the soul's cutting off its worldly habits, the Spirit chants its ineffable mysteries in it. This is a terrible mystery for me, but for the faithful it is revealed truth. O pupils of the eyes, if you provide irrigation, streams will overflow with their abundance![12] For what would we exchange this? Woe is me! Woe is me!

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[5] Jn. 14:15.

[6] Fulfillment (*šumlâyâ*).

[7] cf. Jn. 14:23.

[8] cf. Jn. 14:21.

[9] Jn. 17:14.

[10] 1 Jn. 2.17.

[11] Ph. 1:23.

[12] Tears: see Beulay, ES, 201–205, on both tears of repentance and tears of joy and wonder. He compares John of Dalyatha with John the Solitary's precise defining of when tears come, i.e., during the stage of Limpidity and not that successive one of Perfection. See Joseph Hazzaya's Letter 49.8 in the Appendix to this volume. Discourse 18 in the Book of Steps is "On the Tears of Prayers," see *The Book of Steps: The Syriac Liber Graduum*, trans. Robert Kitchen and Maartien F. G. Parmentier (CS 196, 2004). Isaac often speaks of tears, on their abundance and on the gift of tears. See Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, ch. 14.46. See also G. Panicker, "Prayer with Tears: A Great Feast of Repentance," *Harp* 4 (1991): 111–133. Tears are important to Abba Isaiah as well, as can be seen throughout his discourses, see *Abba Isaiah of Scetis, Ascetic Discourses*, trans. John Chryssavgis and P. Penkett (CS 150, 2002).

2. ܘܐܓܠ ܠܟܝ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܙ̈ܝܘܐ ܕܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܬܠܡܝܕܘܬܐ ܡܫܝܚܝܬܐ
ܒܢܦܫܟܝ: ܛܪ ܦܘܩ̈ܕܢܘܗܝ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܐܡܪ ܓܝܪ ܕܗܘܝܢ
ܠܬܠܡܝܕ̈ܝ ܟܠܗܝܢ ܢܛܪܘܢ ܡܢ ܠܐܡܪ ܦܘܩ̈ܕܢܝ. ܘܒܫܘܡܠܝܐ
ܕܗܠܝܢ ܒܢܦܫܐ: ܐܡܪ ܕܗܘܐ ܥܡ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܘܪܘܚܗ: ܐܠܐ ܘܥܒܕ
ܐܘܣܝܐ: ܘܠܟܡ ܥܡܪ ܘܡܬܚܒܪܐ. ܐܦ ܬ̈ܪܝܗܘܢ ܐܡܪ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܘ
ܡܢ ܥܠܡܐ ܘܡܫܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܥܠܡܐ. ܡܫܠܡܐ ܕܦܘܩ̈ܕܢܘܗܝ
ܘܡܫܠܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ ܠܡܥܡܘܕܝܬܐ ܘܡܬܚܣܢܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܓܠ ܥܠܡܐ.
ܘܢܟܦܘܬܐ ܘܚܫܘܫܐ ܒܡܘܟܟܐ ܕܪܚܡܬܐ ܠܚܘܫܐ. ܐܝܟ ܗ̇ܘ
ܕܡܫܝܐ ܦܘܠܘܣ. ܘܒܦܪܗܣܝܐ ܕܠܘܬ ܐܠܗܐ: ܐܝܟ
ܕܬܫܘܒܚܬܐ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܡܪܢܝܬܐ: ܕܒܗܘܢ ܕܢܦܫ ܡܪܟܐ
ܥܠܡܐ ܟܠܗ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ. ܒܗܘܢ ܕܢܦܩ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ
ܘܫܘܒܚ̈ܢܘܗܝ ܦܓܠܐ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܐ. ܒܗܘܢ ܕܦܫܛܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܡܢܗ
ܒܥܝ̈ܢܝ ܥܠܡܐ: ܐܡܪ ܒܗ̇ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܐܬܚܝܠܘ ܠܐ ܡܬܟ̈ܠܠܢܐ. ܘܪܐܙܐ
ܗܘ ܒܗ ܗܘܝܐ ܘܡܬܠܚܐ ܗܘܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܡܪ̈ܝܐ ܡܪܝܐ ܓܠܐ. ܐܘ
ܒܬܠܬܐ ܠܝ ܠܐܬ̈ܘܢ ܒܓܫܡܐ: ܢܦܩܘܢ ܐܦܠܐ ܒܡܥ̈ܒܕܢܝܢ: ܕܡܫܢܐ
ܒܡܫܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܝܢ ܗܢ ܘܗܢ ܒܗܝ܀

3. O Christ, whose pure blood has paid the debt which our foolish will owed, open the eyes of our minds that we may know where we are proceeding. May your light, which like the sun enlightens the legions of your Holiness, bring me unto You. May your Spirit, my Lord, place me among them even here below and in the world of light. And may your Spirit teach me their language so as to extol with them inaudible praise of You. Create me, my Lord,[13] as a new creature resembling your beauty and may we forget and disregard our previous nature.
4. Glory to the abundance of your ineffable love! Your door is open, my Lord, and there is no one who enters. Your glory is manifest and there is no one who contemplates it. Your light shines in the pupils of the eyes and we do not want to see. Your right hand is stretched out to give and there is no one who takes. You entice with compliments and we do not obey. You frighten us with terrors mixed with tenderness and we do not flee to You. O our good God, have pity on our wretchedness! Our sweet Creator, bind up our brokenness! Our Father full of mercy, You Yourself persuade and compel us and draw us near to You; because of ourselves we are unwilling to beseech You. *Lead out our soul from the prison*[14] in which we have imprisoned ourselves to your true light, even when we are not willing. May your power, my Lord, prevail over us and draw us from the drowning for which we are headed! Remove, my Lord, from before our sight all the veils with which the view of our soul is obscured from seeing your true light. In this light let us always stand stripped without interruption, with unveiled faces, and let us persist in the desire and in the delight of its beauty, forever and ever. Amen.

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[13] Christ as Creator, from *berâ*: on Christ as creator in Ephrem, see Aho Shemunkasho, "The Healing of Interior and Exterior Blindness in Ephrem," *Studia Patristica* 35 (2001): 495–501. For Ephrem, "God is the source of healing and He sent His Son into the world to heal humanity and fulfil what was lacking in nature. The fulfiling and healing of the world is considered by Ephrem as a second creation." See A. Shemunkasho, *Healing in the Theology of St. Ephrem* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2002), 381–387; 407–421.

[14] Ps. 142:7.

3. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܦܪܩ ܟܘܠܗ ܕܝܠܢ ܓܢܣܢ ܫܩܠܐ ܒܓܘܗ ܐܝܟܐ. ܦܠܚ ܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܡܕܒܪ ܕܝܗܒ ܠܐܝܠܐ ܙܕܩܝ. ܢܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܘܕܝܢ܆ ܗܘ ܢܬܟܠܠ ܒܪܝܫܐ ܠܟܠܝ. ܙܘܥ ܡܢܝ ܢܬܪܓܫ ܒܫܠܡܗܘܢ܆ ܐܦ ܗܘܢܐ ܘܒܒܠܡ ܢܗܘܐ. ܘܐܬܒܦܣ ܒܦܪܐ ܕܠܒܗܘܢ ܠܒܣܬܐ ܠܟܝ ܒܒܗܘܢ ܗܘܒܢܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܢܐ. ܒܪܝܟ ܡܪܝ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܚܕܐܐ ܡܕܡܝܐ̇ ܠܡܫܦܪܝ܆ ܘܠܬܝܡܐ ܘܛܒܠܐ ܠܒܢܝ ܡܕܡܝܐ܀

4. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܠܝ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܡܠܠܐ. ܦܠܚܝ ܗܘ ܡܪܝ ܬܘܒܝ ܘܒܢܝܢ ܕܚܠܠܐ. ܟܠܐ ܫܘܒܚܝ ܘܒܢܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܘ. ܕܝܒܝ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܒܢܝܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܓܒܝܢ ܠܡܫܝܐ. ܦܫܝܛܐ ܢܡܫܝܚ ܠܡܫܠܠܐ ܘܒܢܝܢ ܕܢܫܒ. ܡܢ ܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܝܬ ܒܫܘܪܠܐ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܦܣܝܢ. ܡܕܢܚܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܫܘܪ̈ܐ ܡܪ̈ܝܢ ܒܪ̈ܝܫܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܚܪܡܝܢ ܠܟܠܝ. ܠܟܘܢ ܛ̇ܒܐ ܚܘܫ ܒܠܠ ܡܫܒܚ. ܚܪܘܡ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܒܪܘܟ ܠܚܪܝ. ܐܒܘܢ ܕܒܠܠ ܢܘܫܝܐ܆ ܐܝܬ ܠܟܝ ܐܦܝܗ܆ ܘܥܕܝܢ ܘܦܪܟܝܢ ܠܟܠܝ܆ ܕܥܝܢ ܕܢܦܝܫܝ ܠܐ ܓܒܝܢ. ܐܦ ܢܫܡ ܡܢ ܟܠܗ ܢܫܘܡܐ ܕܥܝܢ ܠܝ ܕܝܒܝܢ܆ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܫܪܪܐ ܐܦ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܓܒܝܢ. ܢܒܫܝܢ ܡܢܝ ܢܣܟܝ܆ ܘܕܟܝܢ ܡܢ ܛܘܒܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܢܣܝܢ. ܚܠܐ ܡܢܝ ܡܢ ܡܕܡ ܚܙܐܝ܆ ܟܠܠ ܫܠܝܬܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܚܙܐܗ ܕܢܫܡ ܡܠܐܟܐ܆ ܡܢ ܕܠܡܫܝܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܫܪܪܐ. ܘܟܠܗ ܢܦܘܩ ܒܪܛܠܐ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ ܕܠܐ ܦܫܡ. ܒܐܦܐ ܠܟܝܠܬܐ. ܘܢܚܠܐ ܒܪܓܠܗ ܘܒܒܘܫܡܐ ܕܫܘܦܪܗ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ܀

Letter 6

[On oaths]

1. Father, give a command to the brothers that they not foolishly swear by the name of God in every utterance, nor even mention his name in any oath at all. The use of "yes" or "no" is sufficient.[1] What a great evil this is, which makes us strangers to God and unrecognized by Him. Cursed be he who swears falsely by the name of the Lord[2] because he is not his, but truly his enemy as He Himself has shown me and compelled me to indicate to you. Truly in this vision, *my flesh cleaved to my bones by reason of my groanings.*[3] On this account He has ordained: "I will not give my grace to the soul who does not fear my glorious name nor revere it, but uses it contemptuously."
2. You then, friend of his Lord, be zealous for his name which is blasphemed by the mouth of foolish ones with no understanding. Rebuke anyone who uses it in your presence and put him to shame. Let it not be a little thing in your eyes and do not find fault with these lines. The Lord has showed this to us that we might teach it to you. And every time that I remember the vision, my heart is stirred by its rebuke, as the Lord lives! Blessed is the one who hears and retains this! Blessed also the friend of the Beloved if indeed his hearing has not accepted this common talk from the mouth of the insolent ones!

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[1] cf. Matt. 5:37.

[2] cf. Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12.

[3] Ps. 102:5.

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ܕܥܠ ܟܠܠ ܡܘܬܒܬܐ.

1. ܗܒ ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܠܐܒ̈ܗܬܐ ܐܘ ܐܚܐ: ܕܠܐ ܢܐܡܪܘܢ ܒܥܡܡ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܫܠܝܛܐܝܬ ܒܟܠܠ ܡܫܡܠܝܐ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܕܢܒܗܘܢ ܫܡܗ ܒܡܘܬܒܬܐ ܟܠܠ ܡܟܘ. ܐܝܟ ܘܠܐ ܦܩܘܕ ܠܟܢܫܬܐ. ܡܢܐ ܗܘ ܒܝܫܬܐ ܗܕܐ ܕܟܠܐ: ܕܡܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܢܘܟܪܝܐ ܚܒܪܐ ܠܟ ܘܠܐ ܡܕܒܪܐ. ܠܥܒܕܗ ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܕܢܐܡܪ ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܒܒܥܘܬܐ. ܕܠܗ ܡܢ ܕܝܠܗ ܐܠܗܘܗܝ: ܐܠܐ ܫܠܝܗ ܢܬܠܬܐ: ܐܝܟ ܕܗܘ ܢܘܡܘܣ ܘܥܒܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܘܪܝܢ. ܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܒܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܒܫ ܒܗܒܝ ܠܟܪ̈ܝܗܝ ܡܢ ܐܢܫܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘ ܐܢܫ. ܕܠܐ ܐܬܠܠ ܬܒܥܘܬܐ ܒܢܦܫܐ ܕܠܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܡܢ ܫܡܝ ܫܒܝܠܐ ܘܐܦ ܡܬܚܒܪܐ: ܐܠܐ ܡܬܦܫܪܢܝܬ ܒܗ ܡܬܢܫܝܐ܀

2. ܐܝܬ ܕܝܢ ܙܢܐ ܠܡܫܪܘ: ܬܘ ܢܠܦ ܫܡܗ: ܕܡܬܚܒܪ ܒܦܘܡ ܫܩܠܐ ܒܠܐ ܡܕܒܪܐ. ܟܠܠ ܕܡܬܢܫܝ ܒܗ ܡܕܡܝ: ܓܐܝ ܒܗ ܘܐܓܘܢܝܗܝ. ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܒܟܝܢܝܢ ܐܘ ܢܓܕܘܠ ܠܫܘܬܦܝܢ. ܡܢܐ ܢܘܡ ܕܢܦܘܕܝ ܠܟ. ܘܟܠܠ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܚܙܘ ܐܝܟ ܒܣܪܐ ܡܬܬܐܕܝ ܠܟܢ ܡܢ ܠܘܩܒܠܗ ܢܣ ܗܘ ܡܢܐ. ܬܘܒܗܘܢ ܠܦܢ ܕܢܦܩܘܢ ܘܢܛܪ. ܬܘܒܗܘܢ ܐܦ ܠܪܢܝܫܗ ܘܙܒܝܢܐ: ܐܝܟܘ ܕܠܐ ܦܠܓܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܫܡܘܥܬܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܡ ܡܪ̈ܝܐ܀

LETTER 7

[Of the Saint]

1. From henceforth I will cease from words. One thing has transfigured everything: that One in whose stead nothing is able to satisfy. Understand, my brother, this mystery which is the life of the heavenly beings and ours as theirs in eternity. Let us be tormented by love of the Beautiful One: this is the goal of all our labor. Blessed are they who are inebriated with your love, O my God: by means of their inebriation[1] in You, they are seized with folly and they disregard their previous needs.
2. Taste and see, my brother, the sweetness of our good Father,[2] how pleasing He is! But to those who have not experienced it, words will never make it known to them. He who is Himself sweetness, sweetens and satiates with Himself those who love Him. He rejoices in Himself and makes them glad in Him. He is Himself the beauty of his Being and He transfigures them into the image of his beauty by his revelation within them. He is Himself their wedding feast and their joyful bridal chamber: seeing Him in themselves, they greatly rejoice. He appears in them from within themselves and amazes them with his beauty.
3. Blessed is the soul that knows itself to be a mirror,[3] and gazing intently on it sees the brightness of the One who is hidden from all. He who said on the mountain: *No one may see me and live*,[4] is seen in this place. And those who see Him live forever. O our God, what love is yours that those who have tasted its great sweetness become enemies of all pleasure.

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[1] Inebriation in God (*rawwâyûtâ*), see analysis by H. Alfeyev, *Spiritual World of Isaac*, 248–256.

[2] Ps. 34:8.

[3] Mirror (*mahzîtâ*): in a very beautiful passage Shemʿon the Graceful (late 7th cent.) says that it is the hidden power of the Holy Spirit which dwells and works in the mirror. See *Simone di Taibuteh, Violenza e Grazia: la Coltura del Cuore*, trans. Paolo Bettiolo (Rome: Città Nuova, 1992), 115–116. See also Letter 14 for further discussion of mirror.

[4] Ex. 33:20.

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ܕܡܥܠܐ: ܕܝܠܗ ܕܩܪܝܡܐ.

1. ܡܟܝܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢ ܡ̈ܠܠܐ ܦܠܐ ܐܢܐ. ܟܕ ܚܠܦ ܟܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ. ܗܘ
ܕܚܠܦܘܗܝ ܟܠܐ ܠܐ ܐܢܫ ܕܢܦܠܐ. ܐܫܬܟܠܐ ܐܢܫ ܙܐܪܐ ܗܘܐ:
ܕܗܘܝܘ ܚܝܐ ܕܟܟ̈ܝܐ ܘܕܢܟܐ ܘܕܢܟܗܘܢ ܒܟ̈ܟܠܡܐ ܕܠܐ ܟܡܪܝܢ.
ܡܫ̈ܝܡܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܙܢܩܬܐ ܡܦܢܐ: ܗܘܢ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܦܘܠܚܢ.
ܬܘܒܢܗܘܢ ܠܕܪܘܡ ܒܝܘܟܡ ܠܡܠܟܐ: ܕܟܢ ܙܘܚܬܗܘܢ
ܕܟܢ: ܐܕܪܟܬ ܐܝܟ ܦܢܝܬܐ: ܘܬܟܘ ܢܫܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܕܝܫܘܬܐ܀

2. ܬܟܡ ܐܢܫ: ܘܚܙܐ ܢܟܬܘܬܗ ܕܐܟܢ ܬ̇ܟܠܐ ܕܟܢܐ ܗܘܢܝܐ.
ܠܐܚܟܝ ܕܝ ܕܢܫܢܘܗ ܠܐ ܢܫܟܘܚ: ܡܢ ܡ̈ܠܠܐ ܠܟܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܟܡ
ܡܬܕܟܠܐ. ܗܘ ܕܗܘ ܠܟܗ ܒܫܡܝܐ: ܠܒ̈ܢܝܢܘܗܝ ܒܗ ܡܪܘܐ
ܘܡܫܟܚܝܢ. ܗܘ ܒܗ ܢܟܐ: ܘܠܟܗܘܢ ܒܗ ܡܢܟܐ. ܗܘܝܘ ܫܘܦܪܐ
ܕܡܘܡܬܗ: ܘܠܟܗܘܢ ܠܕܘܡܝܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܗ ܡܫܝܠܟ
ܒܠܚܝܘܗ ܕܟܗܘܢ. ܗܘܝܘ ܡܫܬܘܬܗܘܢ ܘܟܠܗܘܢ
ܕܚܝܘܬܗܘܢ. ܢܟܡ ܠܟܗ ܒܗܘܢ ܘܙܘܐܡ. ܕܢܚ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܗ
ܡܚܗܘܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܘܦܬܡܗ ܠܟܗܘܢ ܒܫܘܦܪܗ܀

3. ܬܘܒܢܗ ܠܟܦܢܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܠܟܗ ܡܚܝܬܐ ܢܟܠܐ. ܕܟܗ ܦܬܓܡܐ
ܘܢܟܝܐ ܐܝܟܗ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ. ܗܘ ܕܒܬܪܐ ܐܡܪ. ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܢܟܐ
ܠܟ ܘܢܟܐ: ܟܠܬܪܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܬܚܝܐ. ܘܟܠܟܡ ܢܟܡ ܚܙ̈ܩܘܗܝ.
ܐܘ̄ ܠܚܝܘܒܢ ܠܟܗܘܢ: ܕܐܚܝܢ ܕܬܟܡܗ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܚܟܘܬܗ:
ܗܘܐ ܫ̈ܡܝܐ ܠܟܠܐ ܒܫܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 8

[Concerning those who assemble in groups and appoint for themselves superiors and directors and oppose one another]

1. Beware, my brother, of those who lose their souls and the souls of their brothers, being anxious about affairs and the appointing of superiors. For they have fallen from the service of God into a stubborn and weary willfulness. And they want to make many friends for themselves who are on their side. They are subject to Satan who troubles the peaceful ones. But if they greatly annoy you, answer them with submission and reliance on your Lord: "I have gone out from the world to set aright my soul's condemnation, not to correct others. My habitation is my cell. And my assembly is the gathering together of my thoughts and my passions. Concerning this it is right for me to be made superior, ruling well the inhabitants of my house. And then I will take care of others: those whom the Shepherd of all would command me to watch over while remaining a stranger to the others." And if they become angry with this, God will not be angry—He will be very pleased with it.
2. The envious one does not see the light, for in his envy he finds fault with the luminous ones. The one who murmurs is constantly at enmity with God. The one who exalts himself is brought down to Sheol. The one who humbles himself becomes like his Lord. The one who loves being solicitous is a worker of the devil of fornication. He who loves contact with worldlings is an enemy of God. He who loves the saints is a companion of the angels.
3. Strengthen your soul, you who are negligent like me. Yet a little while and the evening will come when we will sleep and take rest from our labor:[1] then we will arise at the dawn of rejoicing.[2]

[1] cf. Ps. 4:8.
[2] cf. Ps. 30:5.

ܕܥܠܗ ܕܐܡܬܝܠ܆ ܘܥܠ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ ܒܢܩ̈ܫܐ ܘܣܓܝ̈ܐܐ. ܘܡܬܚܫܚܝܢ
ܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܘܦܩ̈ܕܐ ܘܡܬܥܡܠܝܢ ܠܟܢ̈ܝܕܐ.

1. ܐܙܕܗܪ ܐܝܟ ܡܢ ܡܘܩ̈ܪܒ ܢܫ̈ܘܗܝ ܘܢܩ̈ܦܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘܟܪ̈ܝܐ ܘܡܬܡܠ̈ܟܢ ܪ̈ܘܚܐ. ܕܒܟܠܗ ܙܒܢ ܡܢ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ ܕܥܠܡܐ܆ ܟܠܟܠܗ ܕܡܬܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܙܒܢܗܘܢ ܠܚܒܝܫܐ. ܘܙܒܢ ܕܒܓܘܗ ܠܗܘܢ ܚܒܪ̈ܐ ܗܦܟܬܐ ܒܬܪ ܝܘܡܐ. ܡܫܬܟ̈ܚܝܢ ܠܫܘܠܐ ܕܟܘܚܐ ܘܡܬܩܢܐ. ܘܐܦ ܫܦܝܪ ܡܟܝܠ ܠܟܝ܆ ܦܠܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܡܘܡܚܐ ܘܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܡܢܝ. ܠܡܐܙܘܪܗ ܢܦܫ ܡܢܣܚܠܬܐ ܢܦܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܡܐ܆ ܠܗ ܕܐܙܠ ܠܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ. ܠܡܘܡܪܐ ܕܡܠܝܢ ܡܟܠܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ. ܘܟܘܫܐ ܕܡܠܝ ܒܢܫܐ ܕܡܢܩܝܢ ܘܢܩܝܢ. ܟܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܙܕܩ ܠܟܝ ܕܐܦܘܩ ܙܢܐ ܡܦܪܢܣ ܠܡܘܩ̈ܪܒ ܟܠܗ ܦܦܢ. ܘܗܡܒܝܢ ܕܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܢܪܦ ܐܢܐ. ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܦܩܝ ܙܟܐ ܟܠܐ ܠܡܕܘܪܗܘܢ܆ ܘܡܢ ܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܠܡܗܘܐ ܢܘܟܪܝܐ. ܘܐܦ ܡܠܐܢܡܠܝܢ ܒܗܘܢ܆ ܐܠܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܠܝ ܙܒܐ ܒܗ܀

2. ܢܦܫܐ ܠܐ ܚܙܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܟܘܡܪ̈ܐ ܙܒܢܠܐ ܒܚܫܘܫܗ. ܕܐܡܝܢ ܡܢܗ ܙܓܝܪ ܡܢܗ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܕܡܢܝܢ ܢܦܫܗ ܠܟܣܘܠܐ ܡܠܐܢܠܬܐ. ܕܡܫܟܚ ܢܦܫܗ ܒܡܢܪܗ ܡܠܕܝܢܐ. ܪܢܝܢ ܙܒܠܬܐ ܦܠܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܝܘܗܐ ܕܐܫܘܬܐ. ܪܢܝܢܐ ܕܒܟ̈ܝܢܐ ܒܫܘܠܛܢܐ܆ ܒܒܠܒܒܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܪܢܝܢܐ ܕܡܕܝܢ ܚܒܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܡ̈ܠܐܟܐ܀

3. ܚܘܪ ܢܦܫܝ ܪܦܐ ܕܐܒܘܬ. ܗܘܐ ܡܟܠܠ ܘܐܬܐ ܪܡܫܐ܆ ܕܕܡܝܢ ܘܡܬܐܚܝܢ ܡܢ ܟܠܡܟܝ܆ ܘܢܦܘܩ ܒܪܦܐ ܕܬܢܝܘܬܐ܀

LETTER 9

[Of the saint to one of his friends, a great Elder]

1. We cannot see each other's face without the assistance of created light. Likewise we cannot see the true inwardness of our souls, nor rejoice in the mysteries which are in them without the assistance of the creating Light. Therefore I am amazed at your inalterable love, for while you have never seen the rays of life in my soul, you embrace it with what stirs constantly in your soul. And you mix its earnest desire with the longing which is stirred in your heart. And you remove all the other movements that they may not dwell with it. But may Our Lord requite you for your love towards me by his revelation in your soul: He who is true love.

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ܕܬܫܥ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ.

1. ܒܬܪ ܟܢ ܕܦܪܘܩ ܚܙܐ ܚܕܐ ܟܘܟܒ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܗ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܚܙܘܐ. ܗܟܢܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܕܚܙܐ ܒܫܢܬܐ ܢܦܩܬ܆ ܘܚܕܐ ܠܘܬ ܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܕܒܗܡ܆ ܟܘܟܒ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܗ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܚܙܘܐ. ܘܟܠܐ ܗܕܐ ܠܡܬܠܕܡܢܗ ܒܚܘܒܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܡܘܣܟܦ܆ ܕܡܢ ܐܟܬ̈ܝܫ ܚܝ̈ܐ ܒܢܦܫ ܠܐ ܡܬܠܘܡ ܚܕܡܬ܆ ܠܗ̇ ܒܗܡ ܗ̇ܘ ܕܒܢܦܫܗ ܪܦܬ ܕܠܐ ܡܓܠܐ ܡܚܦܡ ܐܢܬ܆ ܘܡܫܘܚܗ ܢܟܠܬ ܐܢܬ ܒܡܫܘܚܘܗ ܕܗ̇ܘ ܕܟܠܟܝܢ ܡܬܠܐܒܝܢ܆ ܡܦܝܠ ܟܠܠ ܘܡܟ̈ܝܢ. ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܝܢ ܟܡܗ ܚܡܕܘܬܐ. ܐܠܐ ܢܦܪܟܝܢ ܡܢܝ ܚܠܦ ܚܘܒܝܢ ܕܟܘܠܝ ܢܟܢܐ ܕܒܢܦܫܝܢ ܕܗܘܝܘ ܚܘܒܐ ܡܪܝܪܐ܀

LETTER 10

[Of the saint from the letters sent to his brother[1]]

1. I learned about your condition and I praised Our Lord for your healing in God. But I am ashamed of being destitute of all virtue. All I do is eat, sleep, drink, and be negligent. Anyone who rejects care for himself must expect death. But someone has said that sometimes while walking on the road or standing by the side of it, at this time he begins to be absorbed.[2] Suddenly he is speechless by the operation of the omnipotent Power and he forgets himself and all that is his, while being amazed and astonished at the beauty by which he has been drawn. Who understands, let him understand! And everyone who does not understand, may Our Lord grant him to grasp it. But I am not able to depict with images the Fashioner of all. Nor have I power with lines of ink to tell of the creative Beauty.[3] Woe to me when our services are found deficient towards the Lord of all! A double woe on ourselves when all our affairs come to an end for not having served the Master of the house! But let us be still and amazed so as to find Him of whom only stillness is able to speak.
2. Pray for me, for Our Lord's sake, for his place is within you: may you draw us to enter Him, while we will beseech Him with desire to come forth to us to show Himself. He will kindle his fire in our soul and make manifest his activity in it, if He finds it free from the dankness of material passions.

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[1] According to Chabot, John had two brothers who were monks, Sergius and Theodorus. See Chabot, '*Livre de la chasteté*', # 126.

[2] John is probably speaking about himself here, in an indirect way, concerning his own personal experiences. He often uses a similar discretion in speaking about his prayer life.

[3] Creative Beauty (*šuprâ bâruyâ*).

ܕܒܣܪ ܕܟܠܗ ܕܡܪܝܡܐ܆ ܡܢ ܗܘܠܝܢ ܕܟܘܬܐ ܐܣܘܬܐ.

1. ܡܛܠ ܟܠ ܐܒܕܢܘܬܗܘܢ܆ ܘܦܘܪܩܢܐ ܠܡܪܢ ܟܠ
ܗܘܟܢܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܟܠܟܘܢ. ܐܦ ܕܝܢ ܚܘܫܒܐ܆ ܠܚܕܢ ܐܦ ܡܢ ܟܠ
ܡܛܠܪܘ. ܘܡܟܝܠܐ ܠܟ ܗܘܐ ܟܠܢܘܢ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܘܕܝܢ. ܫܠܐ
ܘܕܝܢ. ܕܫܪܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܡܫܟܚܐ ܠܗܘܢܬܐ. ܒܪܡ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܫ܆ ܕܐܝܬ
ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܟܕ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܗܘܟܝܢ܆ ܐܘ ܟܠܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ ܦܐܡ ܐܘ
ܠܟܪ ܡܢܗ܆ ܐܝܬ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܦܪܝ ܦܗܐ. ܡܢ ܥܠܝ ܡܦܠܬܐ
ܟܡܟܟܝܢܬܐ ܢܟܠܐ ܐܚܝܕ ܟܠܐ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܗܘ ܟܠܗ ܘܟܠܟܠܐ
ܕܐܝܬ ܟܠܗ. ܘܟܕ ܬܡܝܗ ܘܬܗܪ ܟܡܘܦܪܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܐܬܚܙܝ. ܦܡ
ܘܡܫܬܐܠܐ ܢܫܬܐܠܐ. ܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܫܬܐܠܐ ܕܐܠܐ ܟܠܗ ܡܪܢ
ܕܢܕܪܘܟ. ܒܪܡ ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܬܪ ܒܕܘܟܬܐ ܠܟܪܐܪ ܟܠܐ. ܐܦܠܐ
ܐܝܬ ܟܢ ܢܟܠܐ ܕܟܝܢܬܐ ܕܢܩܝܦܐ ܐܬܠܟܢܗܘܢ ܟܡܘܦܪܐ
ܒܪܡܐ. ܘܗܢ ܟܢ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܬܡܫܡܫ ܢܫܬܪܬܐ ܠܡܪܐ ܟܠܐ
ܢܬܟܢܫ. ܘܗܐ ܕܝܢ ܟܡܕܡܐ ܠܟܦܡ ܢܬܠܐ܆ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ
ܡܢ ܠܟܘܡܟܢܐ ܢܬܟܢܫ܆ ܕܡܪܗ ܕܟܢܬܐ ܠܐ ܢܦܩܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܕܢܬܠܐ
ܘܢܬܠܡܘܢ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܢܡܟܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܕܡܟܢܐ ܟܠܢܘܢ ܕܟܬܐ
ܕܢܦܠܚܘܢ܀

2. ܙܠܐ ܟܟܢ ܡܬܠܐ ܡܪܢ. ܕܐܬܪܘܗ ܟܝܢܗ ܡܢܚ ܐܬܟܝܢ ܟܡ
ܕܟܘܬܗ ܢܓܘܠܐ܆ ܟܕ ܚܝ ܟܪܝܟܬܗ ܢܟܝܢܘܗܝ܆ ܕܥܠ
ܢܦܘܩ ܢܬܚܪܐ. ܦܘܚ ܢܘܪܗ ܟܢܦܫ ܘܡܟܟܝܢܘܬܗ ܟܗ
ܡܢܘܬܐ܆ ܠܝ ܢܡܝܚܘܗܝ ܕܡܪܟܠܐ ܡܢ ܪܬܟܘܬܐ ܚܫܐ ܗܘܟܬܝܢܐ܀

LETTER 11

1. Your grief-filled letter was an occasion of thanksgiving for us, and I call our misery blessed which was deemed worthy to drink the cup of the sufferings of our Savior; as I am convinced that from the bitter draught drunk for Him, things that are glorious will spring forth in which the diligent will rejoice, making them glorious in the glory of their Glorifier.
2. The athlete who looks at the crown is not disheartened by the intensity of the struggles. And the crown, with which Christ crowns the one who loves Him, at the end of his strife, is the vision of the Holy Trinity.[1] Blessed are you, O combatant, if you look on this goal and you do not turn back. If you are struck with arrows by your enemies, behold, your King observes your struggle and He Himself will heal your wounds. He will anoint you with sweet oil, the oil of joy,[2] and He will refresh your weary limbs which have been afflicted for his sake. Since the outer sun of your pupils has been darkened by the violence of the adversities, all at once you will receive in exchange the place whose sun is the Creator. And this sun will gladden your face with a light without shadow. The limbs which were dipped in the blood of their wounds for love of the Spouse more beautiful than all, even in this life they shine in the eternally existing glory which He gives them as a pledge.
3. No, my brother, let us not be deserters from the battle in the manner of those who are condemned to death by royal decree. But let us call on the Chief of our army to help us and He Himself will give us victory. Let us declare our weakness before Him, and He Himself will be the strength in our limbs. Let us be ever thirsty for his vision, and He will show us the beauty of his face.

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[1] Evag., Cent. I:75.
[2] Ps. 45:7.

ܛ

ܕܢܝܚܡܬܐ.

1. ܒܬܠܬܐ ܒܠܘܝܬܐ ܗܘܐ̇ ܒܗ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ ܡܒܟܬܐ ܒܩܛܬܐ:
ܘܛܘܒܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܪܘܚܝ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܬܐ ܒܫܡܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܦܪܘܩܢ.
ܟܕ ܡܦܩܣ ܐܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܡܫܡܠܝܐ ܡܪܢܝܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܐܦܝܗܝ: ܢܩܒܠ ܗܠܝܢ
ܕܡܬܝܢ ܕܟܗܢ ܙܕܩܝ ܒܡܬܪܐ: ܘܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܝܢܐ ܒܟܝܢ
ܒܡܘܒܠܗ ܕܡܦܒܠܗܘܢ܀

2. ܐܬܒܛܠܬ ܕܢܛܪ ܒܒܒܠܠܐ. ܠܐ ܢܬܦܛܠܢ ܡܢ ܒܡܫܠܐ ܕܡܪܟܐ. ܒܟܠܠܐ
ܕܡܦܟܠܠ ܒܗ ܡܫܡܝܐ ܒܪܢܫܗ ܒܡܘܒܠܢ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܗ: ܝܬܐܐ ܗܘ
ܕܠܒܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܝܫܬܐ. ܛܘܒܝܢ ܠܝ ܒܗܝܠܐ ܝܫܠܐ ܕܐܘܪ ܡܬܠܬܠܡܫܐ
ܘܒܒܫܬܐܪܝܢ ܠܐ ܕܐܦܠܐ. ܘܠܝ ܕܐܒܒܠܢ ܒܥܠܪܬܐ ܡܢ ܫܠܝܐܬܢ: ܗܘܐ
ܡܟܒܢ ܕܘܡܐ ܕܡܪܟܢ. ܘܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܡܐܫܐ ܫܘܩܠܢ ܘܡܕܗܘܢ ܟܒܢ
ܒܕܡܝܐ ܡܩܫܡܐ: ܕܡܫܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܝܚܘܬܐ: ܘܡܒܝܢ ܗܘܩܝܢ ܠܐܬܐ
ܕܐܬܦܪܥܘ ܒܟܠܗ ܐܦܘܩܝ. ܘܕܝܡܢ ܒܡܡܠܐ ܦܪܘܐ ܕܒܩܛܠܢ ܡܢ
ܛܘܡܐ ܕܒܩܛܬܐ. ܡܢ ܫܒܘ ܒܝܒܠܝܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܡܫܡܗܘܢ
ܦܪܘܩܢ ܗܘ. ܘܡܦܪܝܢ ܐܦܝܢ ܒܗܘܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܛܠܠܐ. ܗܘܩܠܐ ܕܐܬܛܒܒܗ
ܒܪܡܐ ܕܒܬܪܗܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܢܘܒܗ ܕܝܠܗ ܦܐܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ: ܗܘܝܢ
ܙܡܝܢ ܒܡܘܒܠܗ ܐܬܠܝܐ ܐܦ ܗܘܒܠ. ܕܠܗܘܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܙܘܟܒܝܬܐ܀

3. ܠܐ ܐܝܟ: ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܦܪܘܩܐ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܘܬܐ: ܒܪܡܘܬܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ
ܡܘܬܐ ܦܪܘܩ ܡܢ ܢܡܘܣܐ ܡܟܒܠܐ. ܕܡܪܐ ܒܪܘܚ ܢܣܒ ܠܐܢܫܢ.
ܘܗܘ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܢ ܐܒܐܬܐ. ܢܘܪܐ ܡܕܡܘܗܝ ܡܣܬܒܠܝ. ܘܗܘ ܗܘܐ
ܢܛܠܐ ܒܗܘܩܢ. ܢܗܘܐ ܙܩܝܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܢܝܬܗ: ܘܡܢܘܬܐ ܒܢ ܡܦܪܐ
ܕܦܪܘܩܗܘܢ܀

4. All who for love of Him have deprived themselves, have received these things of his for their delight. All who have drunk absinthe and gall in the conflict with themselves, to change their will into the will of their Creator, thereby become guests in the house of the Father. As the seer said: "Christ is their table, from which they are sustained by the Father."[3] Since their food became spoiled in their mouths from tears and sighs, now they consume God with great heartfelt rejoicing. And because in the drunkenness of his love they have despised fetid desire, the beauty of his vision more desirable than all truly appears in them, and wicked desire quickly fades away.
5. A certain trustworthy brother said to me—let no one doubt this—that when the foul desire of fornication was burning, he would call out constantly to God while saying: "My good God, give me bodily death lest I die to the life which is in You! My Lord, I am not fit for combat, but as one who is weak without strength for war or strife, take passion and combat from me." And he affirmed: "From that time when my Creator was pleased to visit me, I take great care to keep from meeting women and from remembrance of them. For whenever I meet them or their memory comes to mind, my insides are upset and my belly aches so that I am hardly able to take nourishment that day, from the remembrance of this foulness. And in their presence I am not able to eat anything at all, my body being shaken and losing its composure from the strong smell." He also said: "Even from meeting males who are still young, my brain is confused by their foul odor." Thus what captivates the dissolute, God made hateful in his eyes.

[3] Evag., Cent. II:60.

4. ܟܠ ܕܓܒܪܘ ܗܘܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܕܢܫܠܡܘܗ܆ ܢܚܣܘ ܠܗܘܢ
ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܗܘ ܠܡܥܕܥܕܘܢ. ܟܠ ܕܐܫܬܘ ܓܒ̈ܪܐ ܘܡܪ̈ܘܬܐ
ܠܡܠܦܘܬܐ ܕܟܢ ܡܘܡܘܗܘܢ܆ ܕܢܦܠܩܘܢ ܙܒܢܗܘܢ ܠܙܒܢ
ܒܪ̈ܘܚܘܢ. ܗܘܘ ܗܘܢ ܒܥܘܬ̈ܐ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܒܟܠ ܐܒܐ܆ ܐܝܟ
ܕܐܡܪ ܗܘ ܢܒܝܐ. ܡܡܫܚܐ ܗܘ ܦܠܘܙܘܗܘܢ. ܕܡܢܗ ܠܐܒܐ
ܡܫܬܡܥܝܢ. ܟܠ ܕܡܕܪ̈ܐ ܫܡܥܬܗܘܢ ܒܩܘܡܗܘܢ܆ ܒܕܒ̈ܪܐ
ܘܠܐܢܫ̈ܐ܆ ܗܘܘ ܐ̇ܒܠܝܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܪܘܙܐ ܕܟܠܐ. ܟܠ ܕܒܠܗܘ
ܦܓܠܬܐ ܕܗܘܡܢܘܬܐ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ܆ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܦ ܕܢܚ ܫܘܦܪܐ
ܕܢܝܚܘ ܦܓܢܬܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ. ܦܓܠܬܐ ܕܥܠܬܐ ܠܟ ܡܟܠܠ
ܢܡܚܝܐ܀

5. ܐܡ̣ܪ ܗܘܐ ܠܝ ܐܢܐ ܚܕ ܥܣܪܐ܆ ܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܡܦܠܓܘ. ܕܟܕ ܡܢ ܦܓܠܬܐ
ܫܪܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܬܐ ܢܩܦ ܗܘܐ܆ ܒܣܘܡܟܣܘܗ ܫܓܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗܘ ܠܐܠܗܐ
ܟܕ ܐܡ̣ܪ. ܠܐܠܗܐ ܛܒܐ܆ ܗܘܒ ܠܝ ܡܘܬܐ ܕܦܓܪܐ. ܘܠܐ ܐ̇ܡܘܬ ܡܢ
ܚܝ̈ܐ ܕܟܢ. ܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܢܡܘܬ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܪܥܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܫܦܠܐ ܕܒܟܠ ܒܗ
ܢܚܠܐ ܠܡܪܥܐ ܘܠܡܠܦܘܬܐ܆ ܫܒܘ ܡܢܝ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܡܪܥܐ. ܘܡܬܐܚܕ
ܗܘܐ܆ ܕܟܕ ܙܒܢܐ ܒܝ ܓܒܘܠܝ ܘܫܒܪܬ. ܡܢ ܗܘܢ ܒܗܘܒܪܘܬܐ
ܕܟܠܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܐܢܐ ܢܦܫܝ܆ ܡܢ ܦܓܠܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܐ܆ ܘܡܢ ܒܗܘܕܝܘܢ. ܟܠ
ܐܡܠܝ ܒܝܬ ܕܦܓܠܝ ܐܢܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܘ ܒܣܘܥܪܢ ܒܗܘܕܝܘܢ
ܫܠܡ܆ ܗܘܢܐ ܡܬܬܒܥ ܓܒܝ ܘܡܬܐܢܚܐ ܠܐܪ̈ܙܐ܆ ܕܒܟܠܡܝܐ
ܙܒܐ ܡܡܚܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܫܒܘ ܫܒܪ̈ܬܐ ܒܣܘܡܐ ܗܘܐ܆ ܡܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܗܘ
ܫܪܝܘܬܐ. ܘܒܡܪܒܥܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܡܡܚܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܬܐܟܠܠ ܟܠ ܒܠܗܘ܆
ܡܬܐܢܝܚ ܒܣܘܥܪܢ ܘܡܬܬܒܥ ܡܢ ܛܒܣܘ ܡܢ ܒܗܘܫܢܐ ܕܫܪܝܘܬܐ.
ܘܐܡ̣ܪ ܗܘܐ. ܕܐܦ ܡܢ ܦܓܠܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܐܢܫܝܢ ܕܒܥܒܕܠ ܛܒܝܢ܆ ܡܢ
ܕܚܝ ܐܬܡܘܢܘܗܘܢ ܙܒܢ ܡܘܚܝ. ܗܘܝܐ ܐܫܝܢܘ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܚܝܘ̈ܗܝ
ܠܗܘܝܐ ܢܦܫܬܐ ܠܪ̈ܦܝܐ܀

6. Those who have no distinct taste of food on account of the intensity of the combat, their soul is anointed by the sweetness of the Creator.[4] Their bones are moistened by him and he is also the breath delighting them with the triune Power. All who have tasted these things are not disheartened by the many temptations; and all who wish to taste them should not be discouraged for, behold, hope strengthens them. For shortly the Sun of joys will shine forth within them and they will no longer remember these things[5] which afflicted them at the time of trial. However intense these sad things, all the greater will be these pleasant things. So then, brothers, let us not be discouraged by our afflictions, for truly we are not abandoned beyond our strength.[6] The Good One is faithful.[7] To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

[4] Ps. 63:5.
[5] cf. Is. 65:17.
[6] cf. 1 Cor. 10:13.
[7] Ibid.

6. ܐܝܟܢ ܕܠܐ ܦܪ̈ܫܘ ܛܟܣܐ ܕܡܠܟܘ̈ܬܐ ܡܢ ܥܘܡܪܐ ܕܡܕ̈ܒܪܐ. ܐܦ
ܕܝܠܗܘܢ ܕܝܕܥ ܢܦܫܗܘܢ ܒܫܠܝܘܬܐ ܒܪܘܚܐ. ܘܐܬܛܪܕܘ ܒܗ
ܒܢ̈ܝܫܗܘܢ. ܘܐܦ ܗܘܝܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ ܡܚܣܝܢܐ ܕܢܝܚܐ
ܠܒܠܒܐ. ܟܠܠ ܕܠܒܫܘ ܗܟܢ: ܠܐ ܡܬܡܠܟܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ
ܕܒܫܘܩ̈ܐ. ܘܟܠܐ ܕܪ̈ܓܝܢ ܕܢܬܒܥܘܢ. ܠܐ ܢܬܡܠܟܘܢ. ܕܗܐ ܫܒܪܐ
ܠܫܘܢܝܗܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܡܟܠܠ ܕܢܚ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܣܪܘ̈ܚܐ ܠܗܠܝܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ:
ܘܐܘܦ ܠܐ ܡܬܕܒܪܝܢ ܗܟܢ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܐܬܬܪ̈ܦܘ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܒܘܣܪܝܐ.
ܠܦܘܬ ܥܘܡܪܐ ܕܗܟܢ ܕܒܫܢ̈ܝܐ: ܗܘܢ ܫܩ̈ܝܠܝܢ ܗܟܢ
ܕܩ̈ܢܝܢ. ܡܕܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܬܦܠܓ ܒܐܘܟ̈ܠܝܢ ܐܚ̈ܝ: ܕܐܦܠܐ
ܡܬܒܛܠܝܢ ܠܟܪ ܡܢ ܢܚܟ. ܡܫܘܚܝܢ ܗܘ ܛܒܐ. ܕܠܗ
ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 12

[On prayer]

1. The monk who continues to pray to God by means of stirrings still stays beneath the level of perfection. But you say: "Do not blaspheme, brother, our Fathers extolled this prayer more than all other labors." I also am one of those who praise it and I ask my God that I might spend the rest of my life at it. I know that it is great and that it is exalted, more exalted than all other works since it wears itself out giving rest to the weary and when they have been refreshed sees that they not become weary again.
2. Understand, my brother, Our Lord said to Simon, chief of the Apostles: *I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven*, that you may close and open to all whom you wish.[1] And not only to Simon did he give this power, but also to all lovers of the Truth. Now prayer consists in knocking at the door of the Giver; but the one who has entered the Kingdom and has taken possession of its treasures, how can he knock at the door? So then, what to do? He enjoys the good things within and he is amazed and marvels at the beauty of the Good One. But it would be absurd to say that he is actually praying, for he is utterly inebriated with the beauty of the most glorious Bridegroom.

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[1] Matt. 16:19.

ܕܐܪ̈ܡܠܬܐ: ܕܥܠ ܙܕܩܬܐ.

1. ܒܬܝܬ ܡܢ ܕܪ̈ܫܐ ܒܥܠ ܕܫܘܡܫܢܐ ܩܐܡ ܒܕܘܟܠ ܚܕܝܐ
ܕܐܡܝܢ ܡܪܠܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܝܕ ܐܘܟܠ. ܐܠܐ ܐܡܪ ܐܬܐ. ܠܐ ܬܬܒܥܘܢ ܐܢܐ:
ܒܬܪ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܢ̈ܝܢ ܒܥܘܕܐ ܡܘܪܒܢ ܐܒܢ̈ܝܢ. ܘܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܚܕ
ܡܢ ܡܢ̈ܝܢܘܬܗܘܢ ܐܢܬܝ: ܘܕܝܢ ܫܡܥܢ ܫܪܒܐ ܕܚܢ̈ܢ ܡܢ
ܠܠܗܝ ܦܠܠ ܐܢܐ. ܘܕܪܒܐ ܗܘ ܡܘܕܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܕܪܘܡܐ ܗܘ ܘܪܡܬ
ܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܢ̈ܝܢ. ܡܕܝܢ ܫܚܝܡܘܬܐ ܐܢܬܝ ܡܚܝܠܬ ܒܠܐܬܐ:
ܕܡܐ ܕܐܬܬܚܝܕܘ ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܠܐܬܝ܀

2. ܐܫܬ ܟܠܠ ܐܚܝ. ܐܡܪ ܝܫܘܥ ܠܫܡܥܘܢ ܪܫܐ ܕܫܠܝܚܐ. ܟܕ
ܐܬܠܠ ܩܒܠ̈ܐ ܕܡܣܟܢܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ. ܕܐܬܚܘܝ ܘܐܬܦܬܚ ܟܠܠ
ܕܪܟܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܟܠܗ ܟܠܗ ܒܚܝܘܗܝ ܕܝܘܒ ܗܘܐ ܫܘܟܠܠܐ: ܐܠܐ ܐܦ
ܟܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܬܫܦܝ ܫܪܪܐ. ܕܟܠܬܐ ܐܢܬܝ ܢܦܫܐ ܕܟܠܪܒܗ
ܕܢܗܘܒܐ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܟܠܠ ܟܡܟܠܘܬܐ ܘܐܦܬܟܠܬ ܟܠܠ ܫܪ̈ܝܗ:
ܐܟܝܠ ܢܘܡ ܟܠܠ ܬܪܒܐ. ܐܠܐ ܡܝܬ. ܡܬܟܫܡ ܒܬܘܒܐ. ܬܡܘܗ
ܘܡܬܕܡܪ ܒܡܘܦܪܗ ܕܬܒܐ. ܕܫܘܚܐ ܗܘ ܟܠܡܬܡܪ
ܕܡܪܟܘ ܡܙܠܐ ܗܘܐ: ܕܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܪܘܐ ܒܡܘܦܪܗ ܕܚܠܬܐ ܦܬܐ
ܡܢ ܟܠܠ܀

3. As Evagrius says: "Prayer is purity of the intellect, such that the stirrings of its prayer are not cut short except by the rising of the holy light of the Trinity over the intellect."[2] For he says that through wonder at the light, prayer is interrupted. Therefore perfection is wonder caused by God, as we have said, and not from the continued stirrings of prayer. The one who has entered the place of the mysteries, dwells in the wonder which is in them and this is the true prayer which opens the door of God's treasures to give to suppliants what meets their needs. *Freely you have received, also give freely*[3] to all whom you wish. Of these who have power over riches, even to give as of their own to all whom they please, how can one dare to say that they knock at the door like beggars asking alms to meet their needs? Indeed not! But they distribute sustenance, raise the dead, convey hope, give light to the blind.[4] *You are*, it is said, *the light of the world*.[5] And: *I will give you the keys*.[6] You then are no longer as one seeking; what is yours you possess, since you have the power to bind and to loose in this age and forever. How can such a one prostrate at the door to beg like a wayfarer, while in his hands are the keys of the treasury, to take from and to give; to live and to give life?

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[2] This quote of Evagrius is also found in Isaac. See S. P. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life* (CS 101, 1987), 262 and 300, note 12. Both Isaac and John use a mistranslation of the Greek of Evagrius: "cut short" instead of "occur." The discussion of the limits of prayer in Isaac has led I. Hausherr to perhaps overestimate the influence of Evagrius whereas Khalifé-Hachem stresses a dependence on John the Solitary. See É. Khalifé-Hachem, "La prière pure et la prière spirituelle selon Isaac de Ninive," in *Mémorial Mgr. G. Khouri-Sarkis*, ed. F. Graffin (Louvain, 1969), 169–172. He makes the case for Isaac, but there are many similarities between Isaac and John concerning pure prayer.

[3] Matt. 10:8.

[4] Those who are united to Christ have these powers of his to "distribute sustenance, raise the dead, convey hope, give light to the blind." John sees this as humanity's being associated with divine compassion and actually able to grant the prayers of others, in fact "his mercy is poured out over all like God's." Found in Discourse 23, "On the charity and the love of God," H.27b, col. 2. For other examples of this in the Discourses and in Joseph Hazzaya, see Beulay, ES, 485–87.

[5] Matt. 5:14.

[6] Matt. 16:19.

3. ܙܟܘܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܗ ܐܡܪ ܕܟܝܢܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ: ܗܝ ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܕܙܟܘܬܗ ܠܐ
ܦܠܚܝܢ: ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܕܝܚܗ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܬܝܠܐ ܕܠܐܬܟܠܡܘܬܐ ܕܟܠ
ܗܘܝܐ. ܐܡܪ ܓܝܪ ܕܟܝܢ ܠܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܟܢܘܗܪܐ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܡܬܦܫܩܐ.
ܡܕܝܢ ܫܘܡܠܝܐ ܠܢܘܗܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪܝܢ: ܠܐ ܗܘܐ
ܐܡܝܢܘܬ ܪܘ̈ܚܐ ܕܙܟܘܬܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܒܠ ܠܐܐܪ ܕܐ̈ܐܪܐ: ܒܠܗܘܪܐ
ܕܟܝܢܘܗܝ ܡܦܫܩ. ܘܗܕܐ ܗܝ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܫܪܝܪܬܐ ܦܠܚܐ̇ ܠܪܘܚ
ܓܪ̈ܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܡܠܐ ܒܟܬ̈ܒܐ ܡܘܟܠ ܫܘܡܠܝ̈ܗܘܢ.
ܦܝܢ ܟܠܡ ܢܫܟܚܘܢ ܦܝܢ ܗܟܘ ܐܦ ܐܠܗܘܢ. ܒܟܠ
ܕܙܟܝܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܐܝܟ ܢܡܪܢ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܐܡܪ. ܕܗܠܝܢ ܕܐܦܠܛܘܢ
ܒܟܠ ܒܡܠܐ: ܐܦ ܕܢܠܟܘܢ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܟܘܢ ܒܟܠ
ܕܙܟܝܢ: ܕܒܠܐܪܟܐ ܒܫܡܫ ܐܝܟ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܡܠܟ̈ܐ ܕܪ̈ܓܠܐ ܒܫܘܟܢ
ܫܘܡܠܝܗܘܢ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ. ܐܠܐ ܡ̈ܦܠܚܝ ܚܝܠܐ. ܡܚܝܚܝ ܡܬ̈ܠܐ.
ܠܚܝܒܝ ܫܒܪܐ. ܢܩ̈ܒܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܒܫܡ̈ܝܐ. ܐܠܗܘܢ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ
ܢܘܗܪܗܘ ܕܟܠܡܐ. ܟܠܡ ܐ̇ܠܠܐ ܡܟ̈ܬܒܐ. ܠܐ ܡܟܠܠܐ ܐܠܗܝܟ
ܒܟܠܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܒܝܢܟܡ ܡܢܐ ܐܝܠ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ: ܒܡܐܫܪ
ܘܟܡܫܪܐ. ܒܟܠܡܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܟܟܠܡ ܒܟܠܡܝܢ. ܘܐܝܟ
ܡܠܟܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܒܟܠ ܠܪܟܐ ܕܢܦܠܠ ܐܝܟ ܟܟܪ ܐܘܪܚܐ:
ܘܡܟ̈ܬܒܐ ܕܟܝܠ ܟܪܐ ܒܠܝܕ̈ܘܗܝ ܫܒܝܫܝܢ. ܒܡܫܫܟ ܐܦ
ܒܡܠܐ. ܒܡܐܝܠ ܐܦ ܒܦܐܝܫܘ܀

4. But you will say: Why *did Simon go up on the roof to pray*,[7] and why does the great Paul say: *Pray always*?[8] These Apostles, my brothers, use such things with us which, insofar as they are known to us, are ones which are suitable for us. And by these things they give us a type of the higher things, but not at all for themselves. Did you not hear that when Simon went on the roof, a stupor fell on him?[9] And how is the one who is speechless and astounded to pray truly? *It is the Spirit Himself who prays for us*, says St. Paul.[10] This then is the working of the Spirit and not the stirrings of prayer. As he said: *God has shone forth in our hearts*,[11] and *his Spirit searches His depths and reveals to us His mysteries*.[12] We may have wanted to make this prayer ourselves, but the Spirit of Jesus would not permit it because *we have the mind of Christ*[13] to see the mysteries of the house of the Father.
5. So then they have gone into the place of wonder. They have gained power in the world of visions; the Spirit has united them to the wondrous beauty; they no longer get weary in prayer; they no longer weep at the door; no longer do they cry from afar: "Show us your beauty!" They no longer ask like beggars: "Share with us your riches!" They give because they have received; they share because they have grown rich; they give rest because they are given rest in the harbor of life; they rejoice and they give joy because they are drunk with the love of the Beautiful One. *Streams of living waters flow from within him who believes in me*.[14] But why do they flow, Our Lord? Teach me! These waters give life to others and give drink to the thirsty.

[7] Acts 10.9.
[8] 1 Thess. 5:17.
[9] cf. Acts 10:10.
[10] Rom. 8:26.
[11] 2 Cor. 4:6.
[12] 1 Cor. 2:10–12.
[13] 1 Cor. 2:16.
[14] Jn. 7:38.

4. ܐܠܐ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܬ ܕܟܠܗ ܡܢܐ ܫܟܠܗ ܫܡܫܘܢ ܠܠܝܠܝܐ ܕܢܓܠܐ.
ܘܦܘܠܘܣ ܗܘ ܪܒܐ܆ ܐܡܪ ܕܐܡܝܢ ܡܢܠܐ. ܗܠܝܢ ܐܚܝ܇ ܐܚܡܠ
ܕܟܝ ܡܬܢܝܚܝ܆ ܚܡܝ ܡܬܢܫܩܝܢ. ܒܐܠܝܢ ܕܟܝ ܦܫܩܝ.
ܘܬܘܦܣܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܪܡܬܐ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܠܟ ܢܗܘܝܢ. ܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܝܢ
ܘܠܐ ܠܟܝܡܪ. ܐܘ ܠܐ ܫܡܥܬ ܕܟܕ ܫܟܠܗ ܠܠܝܐ ܕܒܠܐ
ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܠܡܗܘܐ. ܘܐܟܢ ܗܘ ܕܠܡܗܘ ܘܠܗܘܢ܆ ܡܢܟܠܗ ܡܢܠܐ.
ܗܘ ܪܘܚܐ ܣܠܩܝܢ ܐܡܪ ܡܕܡܐ ܦܘܠܘܣ ܡܢܟܠܐ. ܡܕܝܢ
ܡܟܢܫܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܪܘܚܐ܆ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܪܒܟܐ ܕܢܟܠܬܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ
ܕܠܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܒܟܒܫܠܝ. ܘܪܘܚܗ ܟܪܐ ܒܗܡܫܩܘܗܝ ܘܥܠܠܐ ܒܟ
ܪܐܙܘܗܝ. ܘܢܦܫ ܠܡܟܟܕ ܗܕܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܐܦܫܩܬ ܠܟ ܪܘܚܗ
ܕܫܡܥܐ. ܕܡܕܒܪܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ. ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܪܐܙܐ ܕܟܢܫܬ ܐܚܐ܀
5. ܒܟܠܗ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܟܢܠܐ ܠܠܬܪܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ. ܦܝܗ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܒܒܟܫܠܐ
ܕܝܪܩܢܐ. ܢܝܪ ܐܠܗܝ ܘܢܐ ܒܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ. ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܠܐܝܡ
ܒܪܟܬܐ. ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܟܦܢ ܒܟܠܐ ܬܪܒܐ. ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܦܪܝܢ ܡܢ
ܪܘܚܐ ܢܘܪܐ ܠܟ ܫܘܦܪܝ. ܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܫܠܟܝܢ ܢܝܘܪܬܐ ܦܠܝܐ
ܠܟ ܒܬܐܪܝ. ܢܗܘܝܢ ܕܫܩܠܘ. ܡܦܠܝܢ ܕܒܬܪܗ. ܡܢܝܚܝܢ
ܕܐܬܬܝܚܘ ܒܟܡܠܝܢ ܚܝܐ. ܢܝܢ ܘܡܢܝܚܝܢ ܕܪܘܚܗ ܒܢܝܫܬܐ
ܫܦܝܪܐ. ܢܗܪܬܐ ܒܟܡ ܕܡܢܐ ܚܝܐ ܪܒܝ ܡܢ ܒܢܫܘܗ ܕܐܢܫܐ
ܕܡܫܬܡܫܝܢ ܒܗ. ܘܟܡܢܐ ܪܒܝ ܗܘܠܝܢ ܡܢܝ. ܐܠܦܝܢ. ܦܐܝܫ
ܠܐܢܫܐ ܘܦܫܩܝܢ ܠܒܘܬܐ܀

6. How can he who has become one with Christ truly pray as one not acquainted with the Master of the house? And to whom does he pray, since he is a son of God? *Your Father who is in heaven knows what you need before you ask Him.*[15] Then why did Paul say: *Pray without growing weary*?[16]As long as he is a servant, he truly prays but when he is born of the Spirit into the world of prayer, then he is a son of God; he has dominion over riches as an heir, with no further need of beseeching.
7. Then prayer is greater than all labors: it has opened the door to the place of wonder, relieved weariness and silenced all stirrings. But perhaps you will say: "You speak of wonder but I do not know the power of this wonder." I offer as witness the word of a brother worthy of belief who says: "When the grace of my God is pleased with me and draws my intellect to astonishment at the vision of Him, my intellect remains all the day without stirrings in the place of wonder and when it goes out from there, it prays and earnestly entreats that the light of the concealed One, which is hidden within him, may shine out in the world full of wonder." From this time forward, it is no longer a place of words in which the pen is able to flow with ink; here a limit is set: silence. Only the mind is able to pass over and to see this resting-place of all the mysteries. The mind has power to go in and to marvel at the wonderful beauty which is above all and hidden within all.

[15] Matt. 6:8.
[16] Luke 18:1.

6. ܘܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܗܘܐ ܚܕ ܥܡ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܪܟܒܗ ܡܪܠܐ. ܐܝܟ ܠܐ
ܡܦܫܩ ܒܗ ܒܡܪܢܐ ܒܝܬܐ. ܘܟܦܢ ܡܪܠܐ܆ ܕܒܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܠܗܐ.
ܐܒܘܟܘܢ ܥܡ ܕܒܢܝܢܫܐ ܢܕܥ ܡܢܐ ܡܬܒܥܝܐ ܠܟܘܢ. ܒܓܠܠ
ܠܬܘܠܟܘܣܘܢ. ܘܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܡܪ ܕܪܚܡ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܐܡܝ ܠܟܘܢ. ܒܡܠܐ
ܥܒܕ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܚܒܝܒܐ ܡܪܟܒܗ ܡܪܠܐ. ܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ ܡܢ
ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ ܕܝܠܕܬܐ܆ ܒܪܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ܆ ܘܐܬܦܠܬܬ
ܒܠܐ ܒܘܬܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܝܪܬܐ. ܘܠܗ ܡܫܒܚܐ ܟܝܢܐ܀

7. ܡܕܡ ܕܥܠܬܐ ܗܝ ܕܝܠܘܬܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܒܡܫܟܢ. ܘܦܬܚܬ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ
ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ. ܡܛܝܒܘ ܠܠܘܬܐ ܘܡܬܦܪܣܬ ܟܠܠ ܐܘܪ̈ܚܝ. ܘܒܚܒ
ܠܐܡܪ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܛܠܝܦ܆ ܘܠܐ ܢܓܕ ܐܝܟ ܢܣܟܗ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ.
ܐܬܠ ܠܫܘܕܥܘܬܐ܆ ܡܛܠܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܚܕ ܕܡܦܠ ܠܡܬܠܡܕܘܬܗ܆ ܕܐܡܪ
ܗܘܐ. ܕܐܡܬܝ ܕܪܚܡ ܒܝ ܫܒܘܩܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ܆ ܘܢܦܠ ܠܡܘܬ
ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܚܝܠܘܗܝ܆ ܡܫܠܡ ܗܘܡܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܕܠܐ ܪܫܝܐ܆ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ.
ܘܡܐ ܕܢܦܩ ܡܢ ܬܡܢ. ܡܢܠܐ ܘܡܬܦܫܩ܆ ܕܢܚܫ ܠܗ ܢܗܘܪܐ
ܕܒܘܝܐܐ ܕܟܝܢܐ ܡܢܗ܆ ܒܒܠܝܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܠܗܘܪܐ. ܡܢ
ܗܪܟܐ ܘܠܗܠܐ܆ ܠܗ ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܠܐ܆ ܕܬܩܢ ܠܐܪܙܐ ܒܗ
ܦܓܪܬܐ ܡܢܝܬܐ ܒܟܫܠܐ ܕܦܪܝܫܐ. ܗܪܟܐ ܠܢܘܡܐ ܫܒܩ
ܢܦܠܐ. ܠܡܕܒܪܐ ܒܠܒܗ ܦܫܩ ܠܗ ܠܡܡܠܠ ܘܠܡܢܚܬܐ
ܒܗܘ ܢܘܚܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܬܘܪܝ. ܠܗܘܢ ܦܬܚܬ ܠܗ ܠܡܡܠܠܐ
ܘܠܡܬܠܗܪ ܒܥܘܦܪܐ ܕܝܘܡܢܐ. ܕܠܗܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܘܒܗܠܐ ܒܟܠܗ
ܟܠܐ܀

8. Thus every prayer which is not transformed now and then into wonder at the mysteries, has not yet arrived at perfection, as we have said above. Not even does the prayer of stirrings itself remain continually if it has never tasted the wonder caused by the joy of God.[17] Continual prayer is wonder before God. This sums up what we have said. Therefore to these things you will say: "Do not speak of things of which you are not capable; do not say what you have not experienced." Truly, I incline my head in shame, I am silent and I take refuge in mercy. Help me by prayer.

[17] cf. Neh. 8:10.

8. ܡܕܝܢ ܒܟܠ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܕܒܛܘܪܐ ܕܒ̈ܢܝܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܐ ܒܝܢ ܐܚܝ܆ ܠܐ ܒܕܘܟܠ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܠܫܘܡܠܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪܢ ܡܢ ܠܥܠ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܡܟܬܪܐ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܒܐܡܝܢܘܬܐ܆ ܐܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܕܚܣܝܕܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܟܠ ܒܟܠܗ ܠܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܐ. ܙܟܘܬܐ ܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܐܝܬܝܗ̇. ܢܗܘܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܐ. ܗ̇ܘ ܫܒܩ̇ ܕܡܟܠܝ. ܡܟܝܠ ܒܗܬ ܗܟܢ ܐܡ̇ܪ ܐܢܐ. ܠܐ ܬܐܡܪ ܗܟܢ ܘܠܐ ܡܦܝܣ ܐܢܐ. ܠܐ ܬܐܦܠܠ ܘܠܐ ܢܫܟܚ. ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܦܪܝܩ ܐܢܐ ܪܚܝܩ ܡܢ ܒܗܬܬܐ ܘܫܠܐ ܐܢܐ܆ ܘܒܥܕܢܬܐ ܡܬܦܝܣ ܐܢܐ. ܒܕܪܝܚ ܒܙܟܘܬܐ܀

LETTER 13

[On stillness and the avoidance of contacts]

1. Listen, my brother, and I will tell you a truth which I learned from my God. When you lovingly converse with seculars you are considered worldly by God. And when you are together in friendship with monks, the friends of God, you are a true monk. When cut off from all, and you meditate on God continually, you are divine and become like God. This is the sum of all our pursuits.
2. Sanctify your bed by the descent of the Spirit over you and the fragrance of your members will be wafted like perfume from the place of your reclining by the overshadowing[1] of the Most Holy One. It is He, my brother, the guardian of purity who guards those who love Him. Blessed is the monk who even in his sleep knows the holy powers and distinguishes the opposing ones. Woe to the monk the walls of whose cell are evil-smelling, because he is a lodger and not at home in his house. Woe to the monk the rags of whose body are not fragrant, for his tunic does not suit him.[2] Blessed is the monk who kisses the walls of his cell because of the sweet smell wafting from them; who, fallen prostrate on his face, inhales it and, bowed down on his knees, draws it out; who stands on his feet and burns in the heat; who embraces and kisses the cross[3] and glows in the beauty of the Most High; whose heart leaps for joy and cries out in rejoicing!

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[1] Overshadowing (*maggnânûtâ*) and its root *aggen* are used to describe the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and on the gifts during the Eucharistic epiclesis. In some later monastic writings, the noun is used as seen here to indicate the activity of the Holy Spirit upon the heart during prayer, thus revealing the scriptural and sacramental dimensions of a life of prayer. Isaac dedicates a whole chapter to it; see Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh,* ch. 16. See also S. P. Brock, "Maggnanuta: a Technical Term in East Syrian Spirituality and its Background," MG, 121–129. There is a helpful survey of the concept in S. P. Brock, "From Annunciation to Pentecost: the Travels of a Technical Term," in *Evlogema*, 71–91. See also Letter 5.

[2] His cell and his monastic clothing are at variance with his worldly way of life.

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ܕܠܬܠܡܝ̈ܕܐ ܕܟܠ ܫܒܚܐ ܘܒܪܘܡܝܐ ܕܡܢ ܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ.

1. ܫܡܥܢܝ ܐܚܝ ܘܐܡ̇ܪ ܠܟ ܫܪܪܐ ܕܢܦܩܬ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܝ. ܟܕ ܒܟܡ
ܒܠܫܢܐ ܓܒܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܣܘܟܐ: ܒܠܫܢܐ ܚܫܝܒ ܐܝܬ ܠܐܠܗܐ.
ܘܟܕ ܚܫܒܬ ܐܝܬ ܒܟܡ ܚܟܝܡܐ ܕ̈ܢܦܫ ܐܠܗܐ ܒܪܢܫܘܬܐ:
ܚܕܝܐ ܐܝܬ ܫܪܪܐ. ܘܟܕ ܒܟܫܫܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܐ: ܒܠܐܠܗܐ ܗܘܝܬ
ܐܝܬ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ: ܐܠܗܐ ܐܝܬ ܘܕܒܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܗܢܘ ܫܡܐ ܕܟܠ
ܙ̈ܒܢܝܢ܀

2. ܦܘܩ ܠܡܫܬܟ ܒܪܘܚܗ ܕܪܘܚܐ ܕܚܝܝܢ. ܒܟܘܚ ܙܒܢܐ
ܕܗ̈ܘܦܟܝܢ ܒܦܩܘܕܐ ܡܙ̈ܘܪܟܐ ܡܢ ܕܘܟܬܐ ܕܚܟܝܡܘ ܦܠܛܘܣ
ܐܝܬ: ܒܡܛܠܘܬܗ ܕܡܕܡ ܡܢ ܟܠ. ܗܢܘ ܐܚܝ ܢܛܘܪ
ܕܕܒܘܬܐ ܢܛܪ ܠܒ̈ܢܝܢܫܘܗܝ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܚܟܝܡܐ ܕܐܦ
ܒܡܠܬܗ ܢܛܪ ܠܚܝܠܐ ܡܛܪܬܐ ܘܦܪܫ ܕܡܫܬܒܚܢܐ. ܘܢ ܠܗ
ܠܚܟܝܡܐ ܕܐܟܠܐ ܕܡܠܬܗ ܙܘܥܐ ܕܫܡܥܘܢ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܘܠܗ
ܒܬܝܐ. ܘܢ ܠܗ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܕܙܘܥܐ ܕܟܠ ܥܘܡܩܗ ܠܐ
ܒܫܘܩܐ: ܕܟܠܡܐ ܕܟܕܝܢ ܢܘܒܪܐ ܗܘ. ܛܘܒܝܟ ܚܟܝܡܐ:
ܡܢܫܡ ܐܬܐ ܕܡܠܬܗ: ܡܢ ܙܘܥܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܡܢܗܘܢ ܦܐܪ.
ܢܦܠ ܒܟܠ ܐܦܝܗ ܘܫܐܠ. ܒܪܝܟ ܒܟܠ ܒܙ̈ܒܢܘܗܝ
ܘܢܦܠ. ܦܐܡ ܒܟܠ ܬ̈ܟܠܬܗܘܢ ܘܢܣܒ ܒܡܫܒܠܬܐ. ܡܢܫܡ
ܘܡܢܫܡ ܠܝܘܒܠܐ: ܘܡܙܕܗܪ ܒܡܥܪܬܗ ܕܟܠܢܐ. ܫܘܪ ܠܟܠܗ
ܕܢܙܐ ܘܫܒܐ ܒܚܕܘܬܐ܀

3. *Let the heart of those who seek the Lord rejoice!*[4] The arms are wearied by the embrace of the Beloved. The pupils of the eyes have been consumed by tears burning with desire. The ears have ceased listening to all sounds, in amazement at the beauty of the Beautiful One. The body is now kindled with fire and with the Spirit. And the soul has become similar to God: who is able to speak of this? Blessed are you, O monk, for your blessing is one and not multiple.[5] And who may discuss it? It is not possible.

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[3] To realize the importance of the mystery of the cross in East Syrian spirituality see Isaac's beautiful instruction where he describes how the Shekina, having departed from the Ark, now mysteriously resides in the cross, see Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, ch. 11.5. The cross came to be considered as one of the seven Sacraments by the East Syrian tradition. See G. P. Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals* (London: Joseph Masters, 1852), Appendix B: Mar Abd Yeshua, "The Jewel," parts 4 & 5. See also Jacob Kollaparambil, "Cross and Crucifix in the Syrian Tradition," *Harp* 8/9 (1995–96): 77–183.

[4] Ps. 105:3.

[5] Beulay suggests that the "one not multiple blessing" here may refer to the blessing "above all blessings" in Letter 14.3.

3. ܚܕܐ ܟܝܢ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܐܝܟܢ ܕܟܬܒܢ ܠܡܪܝܐ. ܠܐܘ ܕܪ̈ܘܟܐ ܒܟܘܦܦܗ ܕܙܚܝܡܐ. ܕܩܪ̈ܒ ܒܒ̈ܬܐ ܕܡܫ̈ܟܐ ܡܣܬܒ̈ܪܐ ܒܪܘܚܬܐ. ܢܟ̈ܝܢ ܐܘ̈ܬܐ ܡܢ ܙܘܬܐ ܕܟܠ ܡܟ̈ܝܢ ܟܠܡܕܡܐ ܕܒܥܘܦܪܗ ܕܢܦܫܐ. ܡܣܬܟܠ ܦܐܪܐ ܡܫܝܢ ܒܢܘܪܐ ܘܒܪܘܚܐ: ܘܢܩܡܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܘܡܢܗ ܡܕܪܐ ܕܢܦܠܠ. ܛܘܒܝܢ ܐܘ̄ ܚܒܝܒܐ. ܕܛܘܒܝܢ ܚܢ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܘܠܗ ܡܘ̈ܬܒܐ. ܘܡܢܗ ܢܬܠܒܘܢ. ܠܐ ܡܡܚܝܢ ܀

LETTER 14

1. To the one who is continually plunged in a mystical immersion, away from all, in Him who is hidden within all.
2. By means of their diligence, He is revealed then to the few who gaze intently within themselves: those who make of themselves a mirror[1] in which the invisible is seen. Because by Him they are drawn through ineffable reflections of his amazing beauty which are offered to them within themselves, as the Word of God testifies: *Blessed are the pure, for they shall see God*[2] in their heart.
3. O You who have promised us this blessing which is exalted above all the blessings, make us worthy of the blessing You have promised. Give us the hope[3] which You have proclaimed to us and which torments with desire our soul which seeks it. And because we are not pure, nor worthy, may the water which flowed from your side for us, whiten the multitude of our stains. And may your blood, which was shed for our pardon, purify us and make us reflections of your purity. Because You have assumed what is ours for Yourself, my Lord—that which was not yours; give us from what is yours that which we do not possess. And since we have brought You to what is ours by our great iniquities, make us to enter into what is yours by your mercy. Make us to dwell in the world of your light in your glory. To You be glory, from all, forever and ever. Amen.

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[1] Mirror (*mahzîtâ*): according to Beulay, mirror imagery in East Syrian mystics such as Isaac, Shemʿon the Graceful, and especially John, probably comes through Gregory of Nyssa. Though originally, in a less elaborate form, this Pauline image (1 Cor. 13:12) can be found in Evagrius, who explains that the soul's beauty comes from the fact that there is an intelligible mirror in the heart in which the spiritual powers and the light of grace appear. See Beulay, LM, 155–157. Mirror imagery occurs already in the Odes of Solomon and is common in Ephrem. See E. Beck, "Das Bild vom Spiegel bei Ephrem," *OCP* 19 (1953): 5–24. On other examples of the concept of the mirror and the vision of God in early mystical literature see A. Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition from Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 79–80; 91–93. But John seems to go beyond to describe a direct vision of God within the heart, not his Nature, but his Glory, leading some to consider him as an anticipation of the thinking of Gregory of Palamas. See Beulay, ES, 440–464.

[2] Matt. 5:8.

[3] Ps. 22:10.

ܝܕ

ܕܐܪܒܥܣܪܐ.

1. ܒܝܐܡܢ ܓܡܝ ܒܦܝܐ ܪܐܕܚܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܦܘ ܕܟܠܗ ܡܢ
ܟܠ ܓܫܠܐ܀

2. ܡܛܠ ܕܝܢ ܒܝܩܠܐ ܒܝܢ ܒܡܢܪܘܬܗܘܢ܆ ܩܪܕܐ ܕܟܠܗ
ܡܢܗܘܢ܆ ܐܒܠܝ ܕܝܢܗ ܒܗܘܢ ܓܒܝܢ ܡܢܚܡܬܐ܆ ܕܒܦ
ܡܬܝܕܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܐܢܚܐ. ܒܝ ܡܢܗ ܡܬܠܝܛܝܢ ܒܝܢ ܪܡܢܐ ܠܐ
ܡܬܦܠܠܚܐ܆ ܕܡܢ ܐܡܢܗܘܬܐ ܫܘܦܪܗ ܒܗܘܢ ܒܗܘܢ
ܡܬܐܘܫܛܝܢ܆ ܐܝܟ ܫܘܕܪܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܠܠܗܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ
ܒܗܝ ܒܝܩܐ ܕܒܠܒܗܘܢ ܢܝܪܘܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ܀

3. ܐܘ ܕܐܬܐܘܪܝ ܒܝ ܛܘܒܐ ܕܪܚܡ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܛܘܒܝ. ܐܝܟܐ ܒܝ
ܒܛܘܒܐ ܕܡܓܒܠ ܒܝ. ܗܘܒ ܒܝ ܫܒܪܐ ܕܫܦܪܬܐ ܒܝ܆
ܕܒܢܫܡ ܡܫܡܫ ܒܪܝܠܬܐ ܕܒܠܬܗ. ܘܡܛܠܠ ܕܠܐ ܕܩܢܐ ܐܠܦܝ
ܘܠܐ ܦܘܫܝ܆ ܡܢܬܐ ܕܪܘܗ ܒܝ ܡܢ ܫܛܪܝ܆ ܢܘܪܘܢ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ
ܕܒܘܬܩܢܐ. ܕܡܝ ܕܐܦܬܦܠ ܒܢܘܫܝ܆ ܢܫܠܟ ܘܒܓܝ
ܕܩܢܐ ܕܕܒܘܬܝ. ܕܢܫܒܬ ܒܝ ܡܢܝ ܡܢ ܕܝܒ ܕܒܝܬ ܗܘܐ
ܒܝ܆ ܗܘܒ ܒܝ ܡܢ ܕܝܒܝ ܕܠܐ ܡܢܝܢ. ܘܕܐܩܝܡܝ ܒܝܕܒ
ܒܪܒܘܬܐ ܓܘܒܝ܆ ܐܒܓܝܢ ܒܝܕܒܝ ܒܪܝܕܡܝ. ܘܒܒܟܝ
ܢܗܘܪ ܒܡܘܒܢܝ ܐܦܪܐ ܒܝ. ܒܝܢ ܫܘܒܢܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ. ܒܟܠ
ܒܟܠ ܒܟܠܡܝ ܐܡܝܢ܀

Letter 15

1. I salute your Chastity for the love of the Most High. How long will you be called a servant? When will you be free? When will you be a lord over the impure peoples who encompass you? When will you slay and destroy the uncircumcised in your town?[1] When *will you circumcise all those who dwell in your house*,[2] *with the circumcision not made by hands*,[3] *a spiritual circumcision*?[4] When will you be a ruler and king in the eternal city, and when will the five and ten cities which were mentioned be under you here?[5] When will all the kings reverence you and all the tongues praise you because you have become the holy throne[6] of the King, the eternal King? When will you see in yourself the new heavens[7] proclaiming in you[8] the "Holy" of the Hidden One, in the order of their ranks? When will you see within you the mirror of the Light of the One who sees all, that you might see in it the things which are his and examine in it all that belongs to yourself? When will your heart become the ark of the Lord, the King of Israel, and from it[9] when will be heard by you the utterances of God and the making known of his mysteries, that all the sons[10] of your house might become his prophets proclaiming his praise, and at the sound of their clamor alien walls be overthrown[11] and the ranks of the enemies perish?

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[1] Deut. 7:2.

[2] Gen. 17:27.

[3] Col. 2:11.

[4] Rom. 2:29.

[5] cf. Lk. 19:17–19.

[6] On the soul as throne, as noted in the Introduction, Macarius, Evagrius, Stephen bar Sudhaili, and Jacob of Serug mention various aspects of throne imagery. According to Scholem, the earliest Jewish mysticism is throne-mysticism. Its most important documents were edited in the fifth and sixth centuries CE, mostly in Babylonia, thus they could have been available to early Christian writers. Scholem cites Macarius (Hom. 1,1–2) where the soul becomes the throne of glory. Scholem then gives an example of a similar reworking of the Merkabah from Jewish sources. See Scholem, *Major Trends*, 79. Schäfer cites many examples of throne-mysticism from Hekhalot literature, see Peter Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God* (New York: SUNY, 1992).

[7] Is. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Apoc. 21:1.

[8] cf. Ps. 19:2.

[9] cf. Ex. 25:22.

[10] cf. Joel 3:1; Acts 2:17.

[11] cf. Joshua 6:20.

ܕܢܣܡܟܣ̈ܪܐ.

1. ܦܐܠܠ ܐܢܐ ܫܠܡܘܢ ܕܢܚܘܐܠܝ. ܚܣܘܒܗ ܕܚܠܚܠܐ܀
ܒܪܡܫܐ ܠܐܡܠܐ ܚܒܝܪܐ ܠܦܠܡܘܗ. ܐܡܠܐ ܗܘ ܠܐܒܘܐ ܒܪ ܚܐܪܐ.
ܐܡܠܐ ܗܘ ܠܐܒܘܐ ܡܪܐ ܚܠܠ ܚܡܫܐ ܠܗܬܐ ܕܚܕܬܝ. ܐܡܠܐ
ܗܘ ܠܐܒܪܘܒ ܘܠܘܒ ܚܚܘܬܐ ܕܚܡܝܫܠܝ. ܐܡܠܐ ܠܫܪܘܪ
ܫܪܘܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܐܬܝܒ܆ ܚܚܠܚܘܢ ܟܫܘܪܐ ܟܡܬܝ ܒܫܠܝ.
ܒܡܫܠܫܪܘܢܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܫܐ. ܐܡܠܐ ܠܐܒܘܐ ܦܚܠܬܐ ܘܡܚܠܚܠ
ܒܡܝܫܠܐ ܚܚܠܡ܆ ܘܢܫܘܩ ܡܫܝ ܚܚܠ ܢܬܡܫ ܘܡܫܬ
ܘܐܦܠܛܘܢ. ܐܡܠܐ ܒܫܫܪܘܢ ܚܠܝ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܡܟܬܒܐ܆
ܘܢܦܚܣܘܢ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܟܬܒܐ܆ ܕܒܘܫܐ ܒܘܪܫܐ ܡܪܝܡܐ
ܠܡܚܠܚܠ ܡܚܠܝ ܚܚܠܡ. ܐܡܠܐ ܠܐܒܪܐ ܐܠܐ ܒܝ ܡܬܫܠ ܢܒܪܐܬ܆
ܒܪ ܦܚܡ ܒܝ ܡܦܪܫ ܒܡܫܘܠܬܐ ܒܠܗܦܫ ܡܒܪ̈ܘܢܘܢ. ܐܡܠܐ
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ܗܠܒܡ ܕܢܠܗ܆ ܘܠܐܒܝܫܪ ܒܗ ܒܠܗܘܡ ܕܢܠܝ. ܐܡܠܐ ܢܒܘܐ
ܠܚܒܝ ܒܐܠܒܘܗ ܕܡܪܢܐ ܡܚܠܚܠ ܕܫܪܐܠܠ܆ ܘܢܫܠܬܚܡ ܚܠܝ
ܡܣܗ ܒܢ̈ܬܐ ܡܟ̈ܬܒܘܢ ܕܠܗܘܐ ܘܚܘܒܡ ܪ̈ܐܘܗܘܢ܆ ܘܒܠܗܘܢ
ܒܢ̈ܝ ܒܚܠܝ ܢܒܘܘܢ ܢܚ̈ܢܘܢ ܘܡܟ̈ܝܢ ܠܡܚܘܣܝܐܘܗ. ܘܡܚ
ܡܠܠ ܡܚܠܗܘܢ ܢܫܐܣܦܘܢ ܡܘܪܐ ܢܘܒ̈ܪܐ ܘܢܫܘܦܘܢ ܡܒ̈ܪܐ
ܕܕܠܡܘܚܟ̈ܠܐ܀

2. When will your intellect, like Moses, be covered with the thick darkness[1] of God's glory,[2] and when will your face glow with the glorious reflections[3] which shine upon it from within the thick darkness, in order that you might learn the new book of the New World[4] and explain its mysteries to the sons of Israel who have been renewed?[5] When will the Fountain of Life flow from your belly[6] and you will no longer thirstily ask for water?[7] When will you become a stranger to voices and become a living word joined to the Life in the world of light, that your silence[8] might soundlessly speak the truth of the *New World*? When will the Spirit of Life confound your stammering tongue speaking crass things, and make a new tongue to grow in you, that He might speak new things of the spiritual world with it, and that you might make disciples of all the scribes and teachers?[9] How long will the master of the house dismiss you at the door like a wayfarer? When will you be his treasurer, and life be distributed by your hands to your companions?

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[1] cf. Ex.20:21.

[2] cf. Ex.24:16.

[3] cf. Ex. 34:29.

[4] cf. Is. 65:17; Matt.18:28; 2 Peter 3:13; Apoc.21:11.

[5] cf. Ez. 11:19; 18:31; 36:26.

[6] cf. Jn. 7:38.

[7] cf. Jn. 4:14.

[8] See John the Solitary "On Prayer" where he speaks of the prayer of silence and for him silence is not only preparation but becomes the "silence of the Spirit," a prayer "stirred solely by Being, at the awe of the silence which surrounds Being." In the concluding paragraph his words come very close to the words of John of Dalyatha: "When you recite these words…let your very self become these words." Silence here is incarnational rather than Gnostic or Neoplatonic. See S. P. Brock, "John the Solitary 'On Prayer'," *JTS* ns 30 (1979): 84–101. Though God as silence does have Gnostic and Neoplatonic roots, it can also be found in Pseudepigrapha, the Book of Hierotheos and Ps-Dionysius. One of Ignatius of Antioch's key concepts is that God is silence, see letter to the Romans 2:1.

[9] cf. Jn. 6:45; Is. 54:13.

2. ܐܝܟ ܠܐܢܫܐ ܡܝܬܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܒܥܒܕܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܬܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ܀
ܘܐܦܩܘܗܝ ܠܢܘܗܪܝ ܒܪܩܝܥܐ ܡܢܗܝܪܐ ܕܕܢܚ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܢ
ܥܘܦܢ܀ ܘܐܠܒܫ ܫܦܝܪܐ ܚܕܬܐ ܕܚܟܡܬܐ ܚܕܬܐ܀ ܘܢܦܩܘ ܙ̈ܪܥܘܗܝ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܫܪܝܬܐ ܕܐܢܫܘܬܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܙܪܥ ܦܠܘܚܐ ܚܝܐ ܡܢ
ܒܪܫܝܬ܀ ܘܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܠܡܬܬܐ ܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܗܘܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܠܟܠܠܐ
ܠܥܒܪܐ܀ ܘܗܘܐ ܡܟܠܬܐ ܢܝܬܐ ܡܚܕܬܐ ܒܚܝܐ ܒܟܠܡ ܠܥܘܪܐ܀
ܘܡܫܬܡܠܐ ܡܟܠܬܐ ܢܦܠܬܐ ܡܙܪܥܐ ܕܚܟܡܬܐ ܚܕܬܐ. ܐܝܟ
ܢܚܠܗܘܗܝ ܙܪܥ ܚܝܐ ܠܐܡܝܢ ܦܐܪܐ ܡܫܠܡܬܐ ܒܒܢܝܬܐ܀
ܘܢܘܒܠܐ ܒܗ ܒܫܡܐ ܚܕܬܐ܀ ܘܢܦܠܬܐ ܒܗ ܢܚܬܬܐ ܕܚܟܡܬܐ
ܙܘܚܐ܀ ܘܡܟܠܬܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ .ܡܬܩܒܠܐ ܠܓܒܝ ܬܠܡܝܕܐ. ܒܝܕܐ
ܠܐܝܟ ܐܝܟ ܟܒܪ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܢ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ ܒܗ ܡܪܝܐ ܒܢܬܐ.
ܐܝܟ ܒܗ ܠܗܘܐ ܥܠܡܝܢ܀ ܘܒܠܝܕܝܗ ܠܚܝܘܬܗ ܚܝܐ
ܠܐܦܠܓܗܝ܀

3. Why do you ask me to tell you of what is yours, while I do not yet know about mine? But listen to me and I will give you an example which is fitting for me and for you, and also for all the generations of the world. Our intellect has been constructed as a dwelling place for its Builder, if we do not pollute it by passions so that He reject it. For it is defiled by all the images of the world, dead idols which are engraved in it. I offer you the example of this intelligible house; consider it closely. By the passions of fornication we have collected and piled up in it dead corpses. By gluttony we have filled it with foulness that expels all foods. By our fierce anger we have gathered and placed in it the bodies of vipers and all kinds of venomous creeping things.
4. For the love of money we have defiled our intellect with the carcasses of cattle, of various animals, of birds, and of all which is bought with money. We have thus defiled the habitation of the All-Holy. By the love of praise we have stripped it of the ornament with which the Wise One endued it, and we have clothed it with rags which are abhorrent to Our Lord. Through pride we have taken down the image of the eternal King and put there a large hideous idol, that the people who went out from Egypt[10] might adore it: the devils celebrate feasts on it and all the sons of the demons pipe and dance there. They sadden the angels, and their Lord is provoked to anger by this mighty grief.

[10] cf. Ex. 32.

3. ܡܛܠ ܡܫܐܠܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܟܝ ܕܝܠܟܝ܂ ܕܒܕܡܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܕܡܠܟ
ܠܐ ܡܫܡܫ ܐܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܢ ܘܐܡܪ ܠܟܝ ܠܐܘܕܝܬܐ ܕܚܘܫܒܐ
ܠܢ ܘܠܟܝ܂ ܘܐܦ ܠܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܩ̈ܪܝ ܠܟܠܡܐ. ܗܘܝܬ ܐܬܝܢ
ܒܠܟ ܡܡܡܪܐ ܠܚܘܒܝܗ܂ ܐܢ ܚܝ ܒܢܝܐ ܠܐ ܢܬܡܫܘܢ
ܕܝܢܟܘܢ ܡܢܗ. ܡܬܠܡܐܐ ܓܝܪ ܒܟܠܟܘܢ ܙܘܥ̈ܝܢ ܠܟܠܡܐ܂
ܦܠܦܪܐ ܡܬܠܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܬܠܒܒܝܢ. ܐܠܐ ܠܟܝ ܒܕܘܡܝܐ ܒܠܐ
ܡܬܪܓܝܫܐ ܘܐܫܬܠܡܠܐ. ܒܝܢ ܓܝܪ ܢܬܡܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܬܐ܂ ܫܠ̈ܝܐ
ܡܬܠܐܐ ܕܒܢܬܡܐ ܡܒܬܢܝܢ ܕܫܝܢ ܒܗ. ܒܪܟܘܬܐ ܒܪܫܐ܂
ܡܒܠܝܢܘܢ ܫܪܘܬܐ ܡܢܦܪܐ ܒܠܐ ܡܐܦ̈ܠܝܢ. ܒܝܢ ܝܡܠܝܢ
ܘܪܘܓܝܢ܂ ܦܠܡܝܢ ܘܫܡܫܝܢ ܒܗ ܫܠ̈ܝܐ ܕܐܦ̈ܝܐ ܘܒܠܐ ܪܝܫܐ ܦܝܐ
ܡܪܐܬ܀

4. ܒܪܝܫܠܟ ܡܫܠܐ܂ ܫܒܚܝܢܘܢ ܒܫܠ̈ܝܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ. ܕܝܩܐܬ
ܘܦܪ̈ܝܫܬܐ ܘܕܒܠܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܬܕܒܪܝܢ. ܘܡܬܢܝܚܝܢ ܠܟܠܒܠ
ܡܫܪܝܗ ܕܡܢܗ ܡܢ ܒܠܐ. ܒܪܝܫܠܟ ܫܘܒܚܐ܂ ܐܬܒܚܝܢ ܡܢܗ
ܙܒܠܐ ܕܐܬܒܫܗ ܢܒܫܡܐ܂ ܘܐܬܒܫܝܢܘܢ ܒܪܕܒܬܐ ܢܕܝܕܐ
ܠܡܫܢ. ܒܪܡܘܬܐ ܐܝܟܢ ܡܢܗ ܙܒܠܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܠܟܠܟܘܢ܂
ܘܫܡܫܝܢ ܒܗ ܦܠܦܪܐ ܪܒܐ ܘܡܫܡܪ ܒܝܬܗ܂ ܕܒܗ ܢܫܬܘܕܥ
ܒܠܐ ܕܢܫܡ ܡܢ ܡܪܘܢ. ܘܒܗ ܚܒܝܒ ܚܝܘܐ ܩ̈ܪܝܐ. ܘܡܫܪܝܢ
ܘܡܪܦܝܢ ܠܡܢ ܒܠܟܘܢ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܕܩ̈ܐ. ܘܡܚܪܝܢ ܡܬ̈ܬܒܐ. ܘܪܓܝܓ
ܡܪܘܢ ܒܗܘܐ ܓܘܢܐ ܒܫܢܐ܀

5. But what is there to say? If one of us were to see his house filled and stopped up with all this foulness, and he were to ask his friend who is very dear to him to enter there and be a dweller in it, now will he listen to him? Indeed not! And if we wretched ones do not agree to this, how are we not ashamed, being filled with such things, to ask the Good One to make of us a dwelling for his purity? Therefore let us not desist from our course until we make our dwelling as pure as when He fashioned it. And when He sees it, that it has been stripped of all and stands naked, He will clothe and cover it and not allow strangers to come towards it. Indeed *we are his house*,[11] *we who have been* built *for good works*[12] and not for evil ones.
6. If I write to you exalted things, you complain to me: average things are not agreeable to you; lowly things do not please you: I do not know what to do for you! So then I will give you pleasant and sweet bait: let us elevate our words from these things of the temporal world to those of the Creator of worlds. O man of God, how long will you console yourself with written things? Be rather a full flame burning for all those around you so as to see the beauty which is hidden within you. Proclaim with a quiet and still voice: "O You who are hidden and concealed in me, reveal in me your secret mystery. Show me your beauty which is within me. O You, who have constructed me as a temple for your dwelling,[13] make the thick darkness of your glory to dwell within your temple,[14] that with love the servants[15] of your sanctuary may fervently cry out "Holy" in it, with fire and with the spirit, in an ardent stirring tempered with wonder and admiration which, with modesty and great dignity, is impelled with a vital stirring of the power of your Being."[16]

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[11] Heb. 3:6.

[12] cf. Eph. 2:10.

[13] cf. 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17.

[14] 1 Kings 8:10, 11.

[15] Servants (*mšâmšanê*), ministering angels.

[16] Golitzin sees in this paragraph an example of the self as a place of divine manifestation, with parallels to the eschatological enthronement in the Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel. See A. Golitzin, "Making the Inside like the Outside: Toward a Monastic *Sitz im Leben* for the Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel," Contribution to a Festschrift, edited by Monica Blanchard and Robin Darling Young for Catholic University Press, forthcoming.

5. ܡܛܠ ܗܟܝܢ ܢܐܡܪ. ܢܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܢܟ ܚܕܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܕܡܠܐ ܘܬܬܩܝܡ
ܒܗܕܐ ܒܟܠܗ̇ ܥܢܘܬܐ܆ ܘܢܫܬܡܫܘܢ ܙܢܝܗ ܕܢܣܒܢ ܠܗ
ܠܟ܆ ܕܢܬܠܒܘܢ ܠܗ ܕܢܦܘܠ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܥܡܘܪܐ. ܒܝ
ܫܡܥܢ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ܆ ܠܐ ܗܟܝܢ. ܐܘ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܬܪ ܠܗܘܕܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܪܡܝܢ
ܗܘܝܢ. ܐܟܚܕܐ ܠܐ ܢܬܝܗܒ܆ ܕܒܝ ܡܬܠܒܟ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܠܝܢ܆
ܢܫܬܡܫܘܢ ܠܟܗ̈ܢܐ ܕܒܟܝܢ ܒܗܡܪܐ ܠܒܝܬܗ. ܡܕܝܢ ܠܐ
ܢܛܠܐ ܡܢ ܙܘܗܝ ܕܒܡܠܐ ܕܢܥܒܘܗܝ ܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝܗܒ. ܘܡܛܠ
ܕܢܬܗܘܢ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܐܬܚܠܝܢ ܘܡܬܪܬܐ ܦܐܡ܆ ܚܟܡ ܘܡܢܝܢܐ
ܠܗ ܘܠܐ ܦܚܡ ܠܗܘܦܪܕܐ ܕܠܗܝܒܗ ܠܦܪܟܡ. ܒܟܠܐ ܗܟܝܢ
ܐܠܝܢ ܕܠܟܗ. ܕܐܬܚܝܒ ܠܟܠܓܪܐ ܗ̈ܕܐ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܟܫܝܐ܀
6. ܠܝ ܐܚܠܦ ܕܡܠܬܐ ܥܕܠܠ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ. ܘܡܬܚܫܒܬܐ ܠܐ ܦܩܕܝ ܠܟܝ.
ܘܡܬܦܠܬܐ ܠܐ ܥܫܩ ܠܟܝ. ܡܛܠ ܐܚܪܝ ܠܟܝ ܠܐ ܢܕܥ ܐܢܐ.
ܡܬܚܠܠ ܐܢܠܠ ܠܟܝ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܘܫܟܠܐ. ܢܟܠܐ ܡܬܠܝ ܡܢ
ܗܠܝܢ ܕܒܟܠܡ ܐܝܠܐ܆ ܠܗܠܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܟܬܐ ܒܟܫܝܐ. ܐܘ ܒܪܢܫܐ
ܕܠܗܐ܆ ܒܝܬܐ ܠܐܡܠܟ ܒܐܘܦܫܠܬܐ ܢܦܩ ܡܥܠܬܐ ܐܢܬ. ܗܘܝ
ܠܟܝ ܒܟܝ ܡܠܘܟܠܬܐ܆ ܘܐܘܡܝ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܢܕܪܝ. ܕܐܬܚܪܐ
ܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܒܫܠܐ ܠܟܝܗ ܡܢܝ. ܦܪܘ ܒܟܠܐ ܫܟܠܐ ܘܫܠܡܐ ܒܝ
ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ. ܐܘ ܕܒܫܠܐ ܒܝ ܘܡܫܬܐܪ܆ ܠܟܝܢ ܒܝ ܙܐܪܝ
ܘܡܬܫܝ. ܢܘܐ ܠܝ ܫܘܦܪܝ ܕܠܟܝܗ ܡܢܝ. ܐܘ ܕܒܝܢܝ
ܗܡܛܠ ܠܟܡܘܪܗ܆ ܠܝܢ ܒܪܦܠܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܝ ܒܝܢ ܗܡܟܠܝ܆
ܕܒܪܚܡܬܐ ܢܒܥܘܢ ܒܗ ܡܩܡܡܢ ܡܘܕܝܢ ܡܦܪܫܐ ܙܐܝܢ ܒܗܘܐ
ܘܒܪܘܚܐ. ܒܪܘܚܐ ܢܪܫܐ ܡܕܝܢ ܒܠܗܘܪܐ ܘܕܘܡܪܐ܆
ܕܒܝܢܒܘܬܐ ܘܙܘܡܪܡܐ ܡܬܬܕܝܢ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܢܫܐ ܠܟܝܢܠܠ
ܐܠܗܘܬܝ܀

7. Be, my brother, a fish swimming and circling in the waves of waters overflowing from the Majesty. And in its holy depths hide yourself from the accursed fishers who stay at its borders, fearsome and waiting for the prey to go out; for they are not able to fish from it, afraid to enter it lest they die.
8. Feed the fire of Jesus[17] that it might take hold of the purity of your soul. Indeed it will not be quenched from the earth of the soul on which it was kindled, as long as alien waters do not come into it. By the light of this fire you will see the purity of your soul, and the beauty of the face of the Beloved when it is manifest in it. Indeed this beauty will not be visible to you outside of your soul. Nor will it be visible in it without holy purity, for without this you cannot see your own self, nor Him in your being. Afflict yourself with the desire for this, and make yourself die to life that you might see the resurrection within you.
9. For He said: *I am the Resurrection and the Life*,[18] and whoever makes himself die to this world for love of Him, will find the resurrection in himself: this is the anticipated resurrection of which Paul, the revealer of mysteries, speaks.[19] Indeed He is not far from you, He who for whose sake you are weary and afflicted all your days: He is sleeping in you and awaiting that time when you will awaken and awaken Him, that He might rescue you from the drowning waves.[20]

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[17] cf. Lk. 12:49.
[18] Jn. 11:25.
[19] Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12.
[20] cf. Matt. 8:24–26.

7. ܗܘܝ ܐܚܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܚܣܝܐ ܛܐܣ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܕܡܫܝܚ ܪܒܘܬܐ.
ܘܫܘܦܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܟ ܒܢܝܗܘܢ ܡܝܬܐ ܡܢ ܙܪܥܐ ܟܐܒܬܐ ܕܚܠܠ
ܫܦܝܪܘܗܝ ܦܩܕܝܢ: ܟܕ ܕܢܚܠܝܢ ܘܡܫܦܠܝܢ ܠܙܢܝܐ ܕܢܦܘܫ.
ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܠܡܪܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ: ܕܢܚܠܘܢ ܕܢܒܥܘܢ ܠܗ ܕܠܐ
ܢܒܥܘܢ܀

8. ܗܒ ܠܗ̇ ܡܠܘܬܐ ܠܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܢܫܡܥ: ܕܐܝܟܘܬ ܒܗ̇ ܕܟܘܟܒܐ
ܢܗܘܐ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܕܗܒܐ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܕܢܚܒ ܒܗ̇: ܐܦ ܡܛܠ
ܢܘܟܪܝܐ ܠܐ ܢܒܥܘܢ ܠܗ̇. ܒܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܗܘܐ ܢܘܪܐ ܢܗܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܘܟܒܐ
ܢܗܘܐ. ܘܠܡܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܦܪܨܘܦܗ ܕܢܣܝܡܐ ܒܗ̇ ܕܢܗܝܪ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ
ܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܠܟܝ ܠܒܪ ܡܢ ܢܗܘܐ: ܘܐܦܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܒܗ̇ ܒܠܒܝ
ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܢܗܪܐ. ܫܡܫܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܐ: ܠܐ ܒܠܚܘܕܘܗܝ ܢܗܪܐ ܐܝܟ: ܐܦܠܐ
ܠܗ ܒܠܚܘܕܘܗܝ. ܒܗܘܐ ܓܝܪ ܫܡܫ ܐܝܟ ܠܝ ܘܐܡܝܟ ܡܢ
ܚܝܠܐ: ܕܐܝܬܝܗ ܐܝܟ ܠܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ܀

9. ܐܡܪ ܓܝܪ ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܚܝܐ. ܘܡܢ ܕܐܝܬܝܗ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܡܢ
ܠܥܠܡܐ ܒܪܘܚܢܝܘܬܗ: ܐܡܝܢ ܠܗ ܒܗ ܢܘܗܪܐ. ܗܘܐ ܗܘ
ܡܫܡܠܝܬܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܦܘܠܘܣ ܫܠܝܚܐ ܙܪܙܐ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܢܗܝܪ
ܡܢܝ ܗܘ ܕܟܠܐ ܐܩܘܡ ܠܐܐ ܐܝܟ ܘܡܠܐܟܐ ܒܠܗܘܢ
ܢܘܟܪܝ. ܒܝ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܟܕ ܕܡܢܝ: ܘܡܫܦܠܐ ܠܝ ܕܐܡܠܐ
ܬܬܚܒܪ ܘܬܬܚܒܪܢܘܢ: ܕܢܦܠܐ ܡܢܝ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܚܘܫܟܐ܀

10. Sanctify your soul by the remembrance of Him. Adorn yourself by gazing on Him. Unite yourself with Him in the fire of his love: by this He shows Himself to you and gladdens you by the sight of Him. This love makes Him dwell in your soul with his Father and his Spirit.[21] This love makes you yourself like a vision of his majesty[22] and on all sides you will see clearly. By this love you will tread upon the depths, and in his light you will behold the highest heavens. This love will utter in you the mysteries of the Spirit, and will reveal to you the uncreated light and show you how to walk in it.[23] By this love all which is in you will radiantly shine forth, and all which is before you will give great light. This will make you a king instead of a servant and will put all your enemies under your feet to be tread upon. This will crown your intellect with the crown which is offered at the end of the course,[24] and in the stirrings of your intellect, the contemplation of the Holy Trinity will be manifest. Therefore let us put an end to our words at this haven of all the worlds. To Him be glory above all. Amen.

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[21] cf. Jn. 14:17, 23.
[22] Majesty (d-rabuteh) a variant as noted by Beulay.
[23] cf. 1 Jn. 1:7; Psalm 89:16.
[24] 2 Tim. 4:7–8.

10. ܦܪܫ ܢܦܫܝ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ. ܚܙܐ ܡܘܡܝܢ ܒܢܘܪܐ ܕܒܗ. ܢܚܝ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ ܒܡܕܘ ܒܡܫܠܡܘܬܐ ܕܪܚܡܬܗ. ܒܗܕܐ܆ ܢܦܫܗ ܡܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ ܘܡܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ ܒܚܝܠܗ. ܗܕܐ܆ ܠܗ ܠܡ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܘܪܘܚܗ ܒܢܦܫܟ ܦܫܝܛܐ. ܗܕܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܦܬܝܐ ܠܟ܆ ܘܡܠܠ ܒܠܫܢܝ ܡܚܝܐ ܢܗܪܐ ܐܢܬ. ܒܗܕܐ ܠܐܘܗܝܡ ܕܪܝ ܐܢܬ܆ ܘܡܫܬܐ ܒܡܠܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܗ ܫܡܥ ܐܢܬ. ܗܕܐ ܬܐܪܒ ܪܘܚܐ ܡܫܬܠܠܐ ܒܟ܆ ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܠܐ ܓܙܝܐ ܠܡܫܬܠܡܘ ܒܗ ܫܠܡܐ ܘܡܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ. ܒܗܕܐ ܟܠܠ ܕܒܟ ܡܕܡܚ ܙܡܚ܆ ܘܟܠܠ ܕܡܕܡܚ ܡܚܗܘܪ ܢܗܪ. ܗܕܐ ܡܢ ܒܓܕܐ ܡܟܠܐ ܦܬܝܐ ܠܟ܆ ܘܢܘܫܬܐ ܕܪܥܝܢܟ ܦܫܛܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܫܡܘܪܝܢ. ܗܕܐ ܒܡܟܠܠܐ ܕܫܘܡܠܝ ܙܗܬܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܫܬܠܠܐ܆ ܘܬܬܪܘܡܐ ܕܠܒܠܚܘܕܐ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܒܪܘܚܘܗܝ ܦܕܚܐ. ܡܟܠܠ ܢܓܒ ܫܘܠܡܐ ܠܡܫܠܡܘ ܒܗܘܐ ܠܡܠܐܐ ܕܟܠܠ ܒܟܠܡܐ. ܕܠܗ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 16

1. Hear, my brother, what a trustworthy man affirmed before me. "While I was proceeding on the way of mercy, the Beloved met me and led me. He walked a little in front of me and I was following behind Him. He turned his face toward me and my mind was captivated. When He saw that I was dismayed, He spoke to me with encouragement and gladdened me. With his love He kindled my heart and from the flame of desire it began to soar from its place. My soul from then on was remaining as if in annihilation but without passing away. Friends were blotted out of my heart, unloved as enemies from of old. When I became weak, for a time He left me like this, amazed[1] at Him and at what is his."
2. "From that time I was existing without mind as non-existing, without perception, without vision, and without hearing, but in amazement and great stillness. Because there is no movement or knowledge there since, in the experienced one, knowledge has forgotten itself and even how to know. When He allowed me movement, He left me immobile and hid Himself while I remembered only these things and nothing of mine was found in me."
3. Is it indeed possible to learn these things from pen and ink? No, but the one who has tasted You, O Sweet One, O Pleasant One, will understand. Whoever has been mingled with You does not blame the one who entices his friend with things such as these, but praises the one who calls to mind what is his and magnifies the Giver and, rejoicing, increases his diligence.

[1] Amazed, from *témhâ*.

ܕܫܠܝܡܘܬܐ.

1. ܫܡܥܬ ܐܚܝ ܡܕܡ ܕܐܡܪ ܡܪܢ ܐܝܟ ܫܪܝܪܐ. ܕܡܢ ܒܐܘܪܚܐ
ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܪܒܐ ܗܘܝܬ: ܪܚܝܡܐ ܦܝܫ ܠܝ ܒܗ ܘܐܬܦܨܝܬ. ܗܟܢ
ܡܕܡ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܘܐܢܐ ܡܢ ܒܫܘܪܝܗ ܕܒܗ ܗܘܝܬ. ܐܦܩܘܗܝ
ܐܦܝܣ ܠܝ: ܘܪܚܝܢ ܐܫܬܠܒܝ. ܘܡܢ ܚܕܝܢ ܕܐܬܚܒܘܠ:
ܦܠܠܐ ܒܡܕܡ ܒܫܘܪܝܐ ܘܐܦܝܣܝ. ܘܒܗܝ ܠܗ ܠܟܝ
ܒܪܚܡܬܗ. ܘܡܢ ܫܘܠܡܐ ܕܒܪܝܫܝܬܐ ܦܪܝ ܕܒܦܪܝܣ ܡܢ
ܕܘܟܬܗ. ܘܢܦܫ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܛܘܠܡܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܗܘܐ. ܠܐ
ܗܘܐ ܒܫܘܚܐ. ܘܐܬܒܛܠܗ ܡܢ ܠܟܝ ܪ̈ܢܝܫܐ: ܠܐ ܪ̈ܚܝܡܐ ܐܝܟ
ܫܪܟܐ ܕܡܢ ܒܠܝܢ. ܘܡܢ ܐܬܦܨܝܬ: ܫܒܩܝ ܕܐܬܡܘܗܝ ܒܗ
ܘܒܝܬܗ ܙܒܢܐ ܒܗܘܕܐ܀

2. ܘܡܚܝܠܐ ܒܠܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܠܐ ܢܦܫܬܐ ܦܐܡ ܗܘܝܬ. ܠܐ
ܚܙܐ ܘܠܐ ܫܡܥܐ. ܠܡܗܘܐ ܘܫܡܥܐ ܪܒܐ. ܕܠܐ ܙܘܥܐ ܠܡܗܡ ܘܠܐ
ܚܒܠܐ. ܕܒܢܝܘܬܐ ܛܒܠܐ ܗܝ ܠܗ̇ ܡܢ ܕܒܫܒܝܠ. ܘܡܢ
ܒܙܘܥܐ ܐܪܦܝܣ: ܫܒܩܝ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܙܝܥܐ. ܘܛܥܐ ܒܝ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܢܐ
ܠܚܘܕ ܠܗܘܢ: ܘܡܢ ܕܠܟܝ ܘܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܫܒܝܚ ܠܝ܀

3. ܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܒܝ ܗܠܝܢ ܠܡܬܠܟܦ ܡܢ ܡܚܐ ܘܕܘܘܐ: ܠܐ ܒܟܘ
ܕܛܒܡܝ ܚܠܝܐ ܘܚܫܝܫܐ ܢܬܐܠܠܐ. ܘܒܟܘ ܕܐܬܦܪܝ ܒܝ:
ܠܐ ܚܒܠܐ ܠܡܣܝܪܝܠܐ ܕܢܣܒܗ ܒܐܝܟ ܗܠܝܢ. ܐܠܐ ܡܦܠܚܫ
ܠܦܢܚܘܕܗ ܒܠܐ ܕܠܗ. ܘܡܚܘܪ ܠܡܫܡܠܝܐ. ܘܙܘܪ
ܘܡܚܘܫܦ ܒܠܐ ܒܘܫܪܗ܀

LETTER 17

[On deliverance from attacks and afflictions]

1. He for whom you intercede said: "The Lord heard your suffering on my account and He drove out from me the impure Legion.[1] He enlightened my soul with his own and gladdened me. Therefore may they be amazed by their shame, those who say: *Aha! Aha! Our eye has seen it!*[2] Henceforth may my heart be strengthened in the Lord and He will bring low those who hate us because He has exalted our low estate[3] and cast down our enemies who gloated over us for no reason.[4] Blessed is the Lord our God who dispenses for our help what afflicts us and what gladdens us."
2. He said again: "With the arrival of our lines to you, Our Lord led me to the inheritance of Life and it remains with its own forever." So then in the vision of the sapphire,[5] with the eternal eye, let us gaze on the Master of the house in the universal bosom. And outside it, let us exalt the many-splendored One and in this mystery may we find Him who effaces everything, even if we become ignorant of ourselves. O fount of foul filth, O source of all evils in which the Life is hidden: who will not marvel at himself when he descends from the place of amazement where he has encountered the Powers[6] of light and been considered beloved by them. He in them and they in him and with them in the eternal Lord!

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[1] cf. Mk. 5:9; Lk. 8:30.

[2] Ps. 35:21.

[3] cf. Ps. 136:23; Lk 1:48.

[4] Ps. 35:19.

[5] Vision of the sapphire: this image is from Evagrius. He sought all his metaphors in Scripture and described prayer and the intellect at the time of prayer in terms of "the place of God" and "the sapphire-blue light." See Ex. 24:10–11 (LXX). See William Harmless, SJ and Raymond R. Fitzgerald, SJ, "The Sapphire Light of the Mind: The Skemmata of Evagrius Ponticus," *TS* 62 (2001): 498–529. The article includes a translation of the Skemmata. See also Columba Stewart, "Imageless Prayer and the Theological Vision of Evagrius Ponticus," in *JECS* 9 (2001): 173–204, esp. 195–198. Isaac's use of "sapphire" can be found in Brock, *Syriac Fathers*, 363. See also John's Letter 48.12.

ܡ

ܕܡܟܫ̈ܦܐ ܥܠ ܚܘܫܒܠܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܡܪ̈ܥܐ ܘܐܘܟ̈ܪܝܐ.

1. ܐܡܪ ܗܘ ܕܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܟܢܘܫܬܗܘܢ. ܒܫܡܗ ܡܪܝܐ ܢܫܡܥܘܢ
ܕܢܣܒܘܢ: ܘܬܪ̈ܝ ܡܢܗ ܠܫܘܚܠܦܗ ܠܡܠܠܐ. ܘܐܝܟܢ ܢܥܫ
ܒܝܕܗ ܘܢܦܩܝܢ. ܘܡܟܠܠ ܠܐܦܘܗܝ ܒܒܠܬܗܘܢ: ܐܝܟܢ
ܕܐܡܪܘ ܐܝܬ ܐܝܬ ܚܙܐ ܒܗ ܒܝܫ. ܡܟܝܠ ܠܫܡܥ ܠܟܢ
ܒܡܪܝܐ ܘܢܦܩܢ ܠܗܕܝܢ: ܕܐܘܕܝ ܠܡܘܠܕܢ. ܘܡܦܩܠ
ܠܡܠܠ̈ܟܘܢ ܕܦܫܝܢ ܠܐܘܪܚܗ. ܒܪܝܫ ܗܘ ܡܪܝܐ ܠܠܗܘܢ:
ܘܐܝܟܢ ܕܡܫܚܡ ܘܐܝܟܢ ܕܡܫܬܝܢ ܠܟܘܪܗܢ ܡܦܪܢܫ܀

2. ܘܐܡܪ ܠܘܬ. ܒܡܘܢܗܘܢ ܕܫܘܬܦܝܢ ܕܠܘܬܗܘܢ: ܦܢܝܢ ܡܢܝ
ܠܒܪܬܐ ܚܝܬܐ: ܘܗܝܢ ܦܫܘ ܒܝܕܗܘܢ ܘܠܟܠܗ. ܘܡܫܟܠܠ
ܒܚܕܘܐ ܕܫܦܝܠܐ ܒܒܝܢ ܒܟܠܗ. ܒܡܪܘ ܕܒܠܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܒܡܘܒܠܐ
ܒܘܟܢܐ. ܘܠܟܪ ܡܢܗ ܢܡܪܢܡ ܠܦܫܝܢ ܕܩܢܝܐ. ܘܟܗܢܐ
ܕܟܠܠ ܒܪܐܐ ܢܡܫܝܢ. ܘܐܦ ܚܝܢ ܠܢ ܠܐ ܒܝܘܒܠ ܢܗܘܐ. ܐܘ ܡܕܡ
ܗܢܝܐ ܗܪܐ ܢܟܠܐ ܕܟܠܠ ܒܒܝܢ: ܕܚܝܐ ܒܗ ܘܡܦܫܠܬܝܢ. ܡܢܗ
ܕܝܗܘ ܒܗ ܠܐ ܢܬܕܡܪ. ܒܝ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܕܐܡܗܬܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ: ܐܡܟܐ
ܕܦܘܩܕܐ ܒܚܝܠܢ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܟܢܒ. ܘܠܗܘܢ ܪܚܡܐ ܡܠܐܕܐ.
ܘܝܗܘ ܒܗܘܢ ܘܝܗܒ ܒܗ. ܘܡܕܡܗܘܢ ܒܡܪܐ ܟ̈ܠܡܐ܀

3. Do you ask where is the place or do you desire that I speak of it?[7] Come, let us be amazed! Or again, you ask what is its movement[8] or its crying "Holy"? Only silence is permitted and nothing else. *Whoever understands, let him understand!*[9] And who does not understand, in silence let him honor the One who is glorified and who loves to glorify whomever seeks to be glorified. How can we name the place of the vision? It is the likeness of the One who sees all in Himself just as He is to be seen in everyone, small and great. Then in silence, let us reverence our Word,[10] with wonder let us embrace our Mystery,[11] and with simple beautiful deeds let us proclaim mystically: *Blessed be the glory of the Lord from its place!*.[12]
4. Pray for me, I beseech you, that I not be a joy to my enemies.[13] I see that I go backwards more than forwards and I revive the passions which are in me! I preach what shames me and I deserve this shame by my ministry. But the Lord of all has hidden it because his mercy is great and He is good.

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[6] Powers (*haïlê*), an order of the angels, angelic Powers. Unlike Pseudo-Dionysius, John tends not to distinguish the angelic orders but refers to them all as spiritual Powers.

[7] On place (*atrâ*) see Stewart, "Imageless Prayer," 195–201. Golitzin analyzes its occurrence in Aphrahat also giving its linguistic history, including roots of *maqom* in the Hebrew Bible, as the place of divine manifestation and *topos* in the Septuagint, and as "a stand-in for God himself." In the Hekhalot literature, *maqom* is used as a divine name. See Alexander Golitzin, "The Place of the Presence of God: Aphrahat of Persia's Portrait of the Christian Holy Man," an Essay in Honor of Archimandrite Aimilianos of the Monastery of Simonos Petras, Mount Athos, 1–31. http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/aimilianos Some of the other examples of *atrâ* may be found in Letters 1.3–5; 2.1,6; 17.3; 19.7; 38.2; 40.4; 47.6; 48.5–7, 11–13.

[8] Ez. 1:12.

[9] Matt. 19:12.

[10] Jn. 1:1

[11] cf. Eph. 1:9–10.

[12] Ez. 3:12.

[13] cf. Ps. 38:16.

3. ܡܛܠ ܗܘ ܐܬܪܐ ܡܩܒܠܐ ܐܢܬ܆ ܐܘ ܡܣܬܟܠܐ ܕܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܬ܆ ܠܐ ܬܬܕܡܪ. ܐܘ ܐܝܟ ܙܘܥܗ ܘܡܦܪܕܗ. ܢܦܫܐ ܒܟܝܘܗ̈ ܡܦܣܣ ܘܬܘܒ ܠܐ. ܡܢ ܕܦܣܩ ܢܦܣܩ. ܘܡܢ ܕܠܐ ܦܣܩ܆ ܢܛܪ ܒܫܠܡܐ ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗ܆ ܘܪܢܝܢ ܕܢܦܫܗ ܕܪܒܐ ܕܢܫܠܡܝܗ. ܐܝܟ ܢܦܫܗ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܚܝܐ. ܕܗܡܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܟܠܐ ܚܝܐ. ܐܟܡܐ ܕܝܗܘ ܠܗ ܒܟܠܐ ܒܕܝܢܐ ܡܬܒܝܐ ܘܡܬܝܪ. ܡܕܝܢ ܒܫܠܡܐ ܠܡܫܬܡܠܝ ܢܛܪ܆ ܘܒܫܠܡܗ ܠܐܬܪܗ ܢܦܩ. ܘܒܗܝ ܡܣܦܪ̈ܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܢܒܝܢ. ܒܪܝܟ ܗܘ ܐܝܩܪܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܗ܀

4. ܙܠܐ ܒܟܒ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ ܡܕܡ܆ ܕܠܐ ܐܗܘܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܠܚܫܝܒܐ. ܢܛܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܒܟܫܠܪܝ ܡܠܝܢ ܡܢ ܕܒܠܡܝܢ ܙܕܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܟܝܦܝ ܕܒܝ ܢܘܚܡܐ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ. ܗܕܐ ܕܒܗܬܬܗ ܕܡܠܘܡܝܢ ܦܩܕܬ ܐܢܐ܆ ܘܟܠܗܕܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܠܘܣ ܝܠܦ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܢܐ ܒܟܠ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܒܝ ܦܫܝܛܝܢ ܪ̈ܚܡܘܗܝ ܘܛܒ ܗܘ܀

LETTER 18

[On the rule of novices[1]]

1. This is the modest rule which is loved by the Lord.
2. Let a man's eyes not look here and there, but only be looking in front of him.[2]
3. Let him not speak in excess, but only what is necessary.
4. Let him use shabby clothing to supply the need of the body.
5. Let him use nourishment for bodily sustenance and not in greed. Let him be sustained with a little of everything and not refuse some things while filling his belly with what his will chooses, for discretion is better than any of the virtues.
6. Let him not drink wine except when he is with others, or because of infirmity or disease.
7. Let him not interrupt one who is speaking, to speak of himself like one who is uncultivated, but let him wait like a wise man.
8. And wherever he happens to be, may he become little and a servant of his brothers.
9. That he not uncover any part of his body in front of anyone,[3] that he not touch the body of anyone without necessary cause, and that he not allow anyone to touch his own body except for reason of illness.
10. Let him beware of familiarity as of death, his murderer.

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[1] There are many references to the teaching of Abba Isaiah in this letter. Some of the counsels may also be found among the writings of Isaac of Nineveh as noted by Beulay and Wensinck. But Beulay concludes that one cannot deny the authorship of John of Dalyatha; see Beulay, *Collection des Lettres*, 41–42. The Syriac text of Abba Isaiah is found in R. Draguet, *Les cinq recensions de l'Ascéticon syriaque d'Abba Isaïe*, CSCO 289/290 [text]; 293/294 [translation] (1968). There is also a translation of the Greek edition with correspondences to the Syriac text noted: *Abbé Isaïe, Recueil Ascétique*, tr. Dom Hervé de Broc, Spiritualité Orientale 7 (Bégrolles-en-Mauge: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1976). The numbers of the Logoi given here are those of Draguet. In his Discourses, John of Dalyatha also addresses issues similar to those raised in this Letter adding to the probability of him being the author of this Letter.

[2] Abba Isaiah, Logos X, 4.

[3] Ibid. Log. X, 9.

ܕܐܬܡܣܟܣ̈ܪܐ ܥܠ ܛܘܒܐ ܕܐ̈ܢܫܐ ܟܐ̈ܢܐ.

1. ܗܳܢܘ ܛܘܒܐ ܢܟܦܐ ܕܪܚܝܡ ܥܠ ܡܪܝܐ.
2. ܕܠܐ ܣܢܩ ܠܒܢ̈ܘܗܝ ܕܐܝܟ ܠܒܐ ܘܠܒܐ: ܐܠܐ ܠܟܝܬܘܗܝ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܛܪ ܒܠܒܗ.
3. ܘܠܐ ܢܦܠܠ ܠܐ̈ܬܐ: ܐܠܐ ܒܠܒܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܐ̈ܠܗ.
4. ܘܒܠܒܘܬܐ ܒܥܝܐ ܠܡܘܠܒܐ ܕܥܘܢܝ ܦܩܪܐ ܠܐܢܫܐ.
5. ܘܒܥܝܒܪ̈ܐ ܠܡܘܢܝܐ ܕܦܩܪܗ ܠܐܢܫܐ: ܘܠܐ ܒܝܒܘܬܐ. ܘܒܪ̈ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܒܠܒܘܢ ܢܠܐܒܪ. ܘܠܐ ܡܝܣܘܢ ܢܥܠܐ: ܘܕܡܠܐ ܒܪ̈ܥܘܗ ܡܢ ܗܠܒܢ ܕܒܠܐ ܕܒܝܗ ܘܡܠܐܪܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܡܠܐ̈ܟ ܦܪ̈ܘܥܬܐ ܗܘ.
6. ܘܣܡܪܐ ܥܠܝܗ ܡܢ ܕܒܡ ܐܝ̈ܬܝܐ: ܐܘ ܓܒܠܬܐ ܕܡܝܒܠܘܬܐ ܘܒܘܪܘܢܐ ܠܐ ܢܥܠܬܐ.
7. ܘܠܐ ܢܥܣܘܩ ܡܠܠܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܦܠܠ: ܘܢܦܠܠ ܗܘ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܪܕܝܐ: ܐܠܐ ܢܠܦܪ ܐܝܟ ܢܒܝܥܐ.
8. ܘܒܠܠ ܒܪ ܕܡܣܥܠܐܡܠܠ: ܗܘ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܒܘܪܐ ܘܡܡܡܡܢܐ ܕܐ̈ܣܝܘܗܝ.
9. ܘܠܐ ܢܛܠܐ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܗܕ̈ܡܘܗܝ ܡܕܡ ܐܝܟ. ܘܠܐ ܢܦܪܘܥ ܠܒܦܪܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܓܒܠܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܝ. ܘܠܐ ܠܒܦܪܗ ܕܒܠܗ ܢܥܒܘܕ ܕܠܐܦܪܥ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܓܒܠܬܐ ܕܐܘܒܕܢܐ.
10. ܘܡܢ ܦܐܪ̈ܘܥܣܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܦܘܬܐ ܦܛܘܠܗ ܢܕܘܪ.

11. Let him have a chaste arrangement[4] for sleeping lest the Power guarding him stay away from him. And when he sleeps, let no one see him, if possible.
12. Let him not spit in front of anyone[5] and if a cough comes to him at table, let him turn his face from the table and then cough.
13. May he eat and drink with sobriety as is fitting for the sons of God.
14. Let him not hold out his hand boldly before his companions. If a stranger sits with him, let him press him to eat two or three times, and then calmly take food and place it on the table and not reject it.
15. Let his feet and clothing be orderly at table.[6]
16. When he yawns let him cover his mouth lest it be seen, and draw his breath in and it will pass.[7]
17. When he enters a cell whether it be his master's, or that of his disciple, or that of his friend, let him be vigilant, not noticing or inquiring about what is in it.[8] And even if he is forced by its owner to do this, let him not be persuaded. Whoever is presumptuous in this is a stranger to the monastic habit and to Christ who bestows it. Also, he should not look at the place where the utensils of his friend's cell are placed.
18. Let him gently close and open his own door and that of others, without a sound being heard.
19. Let him not hurry while walking except in case of necessity.
20. May he be dependent and obedient in every action.
21. Let him not keep company with anyone who is held by possessions, or by money, or by worldly people, lest he become a slave of Satan.
22. Let him speak pleasantly with everyone and look at everyone with modesty and not focus his eyes on a man's face.

[4] Ibid. Log. X, 69.
[5] Ibid. Log. X, 17.
[6] Ibid. Log. X, 12.
[7] Ibid. Log. X, 20.
[8] Ibid. Log. X, 54.

11. ܘܢܩܢܐ ܛܘܟܣܐ ܢܟܦܐ ܒܡܬܡܟܟܘܬܗ܂ ܘܠܐ ܢܪܝܡ ܩܠܗ ܚܝܠܐ ܢܛܘܪܗ. ܘܟܕ ܕܡܟܝܟ. ܠܝ ܡܕܝܐ ܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܢܝܚܘܬܗ.

12. ܘܪܘܡܐ ܩܕܡ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܕܡܐ. ܘܐܦ ܕܐܬܐ ܠܗ ܡܟܘܠܐ ܟܠܗ ܦܬܘܪܐ܂ ܢܗܦܟ ܐܦܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܦܬܘܪܐ܂ ܘܗܕܝܢ ܕܡܟܠܐ.

13. ܘܢܦܐܬܐ ܕܠܒܗ ܘܕܡܥܬܐ܂ ܐܝܟ ܕܪܘܡ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܠܠܗܐ.

14. ܘܠܐ ܢܬܚܡܨ ܐܝܟ ܩܕܡ ܚܒܪܘܗܝ ܡܢܚܬܐ. ܘܐܦ ܢܐܟܠ ܥܡܗ ܐܚܘܢܐ܂ ܢܟܪܗܘܢ ܠܦܬܐ ܐܘ ܠܗܠܐ ܐܟܬܢ ܕܢܟܠܗ ܘܢܚܬܐ ܕܗܒ ܘܢܚܝܡ ܟܠܗ ܦܬܘܪܐ܂ ܘܠܐ ܢܟܦܪ.

15. ܘܢܗܘܐ ܡܬܛܒܥ ܒܝܡܝܢܘܗܝ ܘܡܠܒܘܗܝ ܟܠܗ ܦܬܘܪܐ.

16. ܘܟܕ ܡܬܦܢܐ܂ ܢܟܦܐ ܦܘܡܗ ܡܢ ܕܠܐܬܐ܂ ܘܢܛܠ ܫܘܡܗ ܘܢܟܪ.

17. ܘܟܕ ܢܐܟܠ ܠܡܟܠܬܐ ܐܦ ܕܪܟܗ ܐܘ ܕܠܡܟܪܗ ܐܘ ܕܪܢܫܗ܂ ܠܗܘܢܘܬܐ ܕܐܘܕܝ ܢܫܡܗ܂ ܡܢ ܕܚܙܐ ܘܡܬܦܠܐ ܠܐܟܠܝܢ ܕܠܗ. ܘܐܦ ܢܬܟܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܗ ܠܡܟܟܒ ܗܘܐ܂ ܠܐ ܢܬܪܦܝܣ. ܡܢ ܕܡܩܪܒ ܟܠܗ ܗܘܐ܂ ܢܩܪܝܐ ܗܘ ܠܐܦܩܡܐ ܕܕܪܝܐ ܘܠܡܩܡܚܐ ܢܘܟܪܗ. ܘܠܐ ܚܙܐ ܠܒܘܟܬܐ ܕܟܗ ܫܒܩܝܢ ܡܠܝܢ ܘܟܠܬܗ ܕܪܢܫܗ.

18. ܘܢܚܫܘܒ ܕܐܝܟ ܘܢܬܠܚܡ ܠܪܘܚܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܘܕܐܝܬܝܗ܃ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܡܥ ܠܟܠܗ.

19. ܘܠܐ ܢܫܬܪܘܒ ܒܗܘܟܠܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܟܠܬܐ ܕܟܠܐ.

20. ܘܗܘ ܢܗܘܐ ܡܫܬܒܪܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܟܕ ܘܡܫܬܡܫܢܐ.

21. ܘܠܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܒܪܒܘܬܐ܂ ܐܘ ܒܫܘܦܪܐ܂ ܐܘ ܒܒܨܝܪܐ܂ ܠܐ ܢܬܦܫ܂ ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܒܪܐ ܠܟܬܒܐ.

22. ܘܒܫܡܫܬܐ ܢܟܠܠ ܒܗܡ ܟܠܗ ܐܝܟ܂ ܘܢܦܐܬܐ ܕܚܘܪ ܒܟܠܗ ܒܪܝܟ. ܘܠܐ ܢܛܠܐ ܒܝܢܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܦܪܘܫܐ ܕܐܝܟ.

23. When he travels on the road, let him not be ahead of anyone who is older than he.[9] And if his friend stays behind for a certain necessity, let him step aside for a little while and wait until he comes. Whoever does not do this is foolish, like a lawless wild boar. And if his friend speaks with those persons whom they have met, let him be patient while not hurrying the one who is speaking.
24. Whoever is healthy, may he say to the one who is infirm before the scheduled time: "Come, let us eat!"[10]
25. Let him not blame a man for his transgression whatever it be, but in all things let him make himself the guilty one.[11]
26. May he choose to do every lowly act, with humility.
27. When he laughs, let him not show his teeth.[12]
28. If there be a necessity to speak with women, let him speak while turning his face from seeing them.[13] And as to the daughters of the Covenant,[14] let him avoid meeting them and conversing with them or even seeing them, as he would with a snare of Satan, lest he defile his heart with the filth of impure passions. Even if they are his natural sisters, let him guard himself from them in all things as from strangers.
29. Let him be careful of contact with his kindred, lest his heart become cold to the love of God.
30. From fellowship or familiarity with young boys, let him keep away as from friendship with the Evil One.[15]
31. May one person be his counselor and intimate acquaintance and companion:[16] one who fears the Lord and dwells in peace with himself and who is poor in his manner of life, but rich in the mysteries of God. From any other person let him guard his secrets and his ways of living and not reveal his labors and his battles.

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[9] Ibid. Log. X, 73.

[10] Ibid. Log. XII, 1, 42.

[11] Ibid. Log. X, 26.

[12] Ibid. Log. X, 68.

[13] Ibid. Log. X, 78–79.

[14] Daughters of the Covenant: see Letter 4:2. The occurrence of the phrase in this Letter convinced A. Vööbus of an early composition of the Letter and against authorship by John, as noted by Beulay, ES, 42–43.

[15] Abba Isaiah, Log. V, 2.

[16] cf. Abba Isaiah, Log. V, 11.

23. ܘܟܕ ܐܪܟܐ ܒܐܘܪܚܐ܆ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܩܪܡ ܠܒܪܗ ܕܦܣܩ ܡܢܗ. ܘܐܦ
ܦܠܛ ܡܢܗ ܣܒܪܗ ܡܛܠ ܕܒܟܠܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ܆ ܢܦܫ ܡܢܗ
ܡܒܠܠ ܘܢܦܫ ܒܪܡܐ ܕܐܬܐ. ܡܢ ܕܗܘܐ ܠܐ ܚܒܪ܆ ܫܒܠܐ ܗܘ
ܒܪܡܫܐ ܚܙܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܡܘܬ. ܘܐܦ ܡܦܠܠܐ ܣܒܪܗ ܒܟܡ ܐܢܫܝܢ
ܐܝܟܢ ܕܦܠܛܝܢ ܒܗܘܢ܆ ܢܛܪ ܗܘ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܡܦܪܥܘܢ ܠܒܪܗ
ܕܡܣܟܠܐ.

24. ܘܐܝܟܐ ܕܢܚܡܝܗ܆ ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܒܪܗ ܕܡܚܝܠܐ ܩܕܡ ܐܘܚܕܢܐ ܐܬ
ܕܠܒܝܬ.

25. ܘܠܐ ܢܒܥܐ ܠܒܪܢܫ ܒܟܠ ܫܒܠܘܗܝ܆ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܡܪ. ܐܠܐ
ܒܫܠܡܐ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܕܒܟܡ ܚܝܠܐ.

26. ܘܟܠ ܫܘܒܪܢܐ ܒܪܝܐ ܗܘܐ ܟܪܝܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܢ ܒܡܘܟܟܐ.

27. ܘܟܕ ܚܙܐ ܠܐ ܢܚܠܐ ܡܫܡܫܝܢ.

28. ܘܟܡ ܢܦܠܐ ܠܝ ܠܟܠܐ ܕܢܦܠܐ܆ ܟܕ ܡܫܘܚܬܐ ܐܦܝܢ ܡܢ ܚܪܝܢ
ܢܦܠܐ. ܘܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܡܢܝܢܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܩܢܐ ܕܫܛܝܐ ܢܪܫܡ܆ ܡܢ
ܦܓܪܝܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ ܘܚܕܝܢ܆ ܕܠܐ ܢܦܠܘܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܒܚܝܠܐ
ܕܢܦܠܐ ܛܒܐ. ܘܐܦ ܐܢܫܐ ܢܘܩܝܢ ܒܟܠܗ܆ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܢܘܟܪܝܬܐ
ܕܛܪ ܢܦܫܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ.

29. ܘܡܢ ܚܘܠܛܢܐ ܕܒܢܝ ܫܡܫܐ܆ ܗܘܐ ܐܚܝܕ܆ ܕܠܐ ܢܦܪܘܫ
ܠܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܚܘܒܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ.

30. ܘܡܢ ܣܒܪܬܐ ܘܦܐܪܘܫܘܬܐ ܕܟܡ ܛܥܝܢܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܙܒܢܘܬܐ
ܕܟܡ ܒܝܫܐ ܢܛܘܪ.

31. ܘܚܕ ܗܘܐ ܒܪ ܙܐܪܗ ܘܒܪ ܚܝܠܗ ܘܡܘܠܕܗ܆ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܕܪܟܐ ܡܢ
ܡܪܝܐ ܘܛܠܐ ܒܟܡ ܢܦܫܗ܆ ܘܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܒܟܘܡܪܗ ܘܟܠܬܪ
ܒܙܐܪܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܘܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܪܢܫ ܬܘܒ ܕܛܪ ܙܐܪܘܗܝ
ܘܕܘܒܪܘܗܝ܆ ܘܡܢ ܕܢܚܠܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܗܝ ܘܡܫܒܚܘܗܝ.

32. Let him not cast off his cloak unnecessarily where he may be seen by another and let him go out modestly for his necessities as someone who reveres his guardian angel.[17]
33. May he use all things in the fear of God and with mortal constraint, even if the heart is unwilling.
34. Poison is better food for him than eating with a woman,[18] even if it be his mother or his sister.
35. Rather than cover himself in a cloak with another and sleep like this,[19] even if it be his natural brother, better for him to dwell with a dragon!
36. If the one who is older than he says to him on the road or at work: "Come let us say the psalms!"—he must obey; otherwise, let his tongue keep silent and his heart glorify God.
37. May he not quarrel about anything[20] and not bring false accusations, nor deceive, nor swear on the Name of the Lord.
38. Let him be despised, yet not despise; suffer wrong, yet not defraud. It is better that these bodily things perish with the body rather than even one of the things of the soul be lacking.
39. Let him not utter judgment with anyone, but let him endure to be judged as guilty even when he is innocent.
40. May he not love himself in any of the things of the world.[21]
41. Let him obey superiors, but avoid mingling with them: this is a snare which takes the dissolute to destruction. O insatiable friend of your belly, better for you to put fiery coals in your belly and not the torments of superiors.
42. May he pour forth his mercy on all mankind, while being removed and cut off from everyone.[22]

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[17] Abba Isaiah, Log. X, 57.

[18] Ibid. Log. V, 2.

[19] Ibid. Log. X, 8.

[20] Ibid. Log. V, 16.

[21] cf. Jn. 12:25.

[22] See Evagrius, "Chapters on Prayer" # 124 in *Evagrius, The Pratikos and Chapters on Prayer*, trans. J. E. Bamberger (CS 4, 1981), 76.

32. ܘܠܐ ܒܣܒܐ ܡܢܗ ܓܒܠܗ ܒܠܒܒ ܡܢ ܐܠܦܝ܆ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܗܘܐ
ܕܡܬܐܒܕܐ ܡܢ ܐܢܫ. ܘܢܬܥܐܠ ܗܘܐ ܢܦܩ ܠܒܝܫܬܗ܆ ܐܝܟܢ
ܕܓܘܐ ܡܢ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܢܛܘܪܗ.
33. ܘܒܝܬܠܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܬܢܦܫ ܒܒܠܘܡ܆ ܘܒܒܝܬܐ
ܕܡܘܬܐ. ܐܦ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܠܒܢܐ.
34. ܘܒܡ ܐܬܠܐ ܠܡܒܒܒܗ. ܦܩܣ ܒܗ ܦܡ ܡܘܬܐ ܠܡܬܐܟܠ܆
ܐܦ ܐܡܗ ܐܘ ܫܠܗ ܠܗܘܐ.
35. ܘܡܢ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܒܗܡ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܓܠܐ ܘܕܡܝܢ܆ ܐܦ ܐܚܘܗܝ ܒܚܝܐ
ܗܘܐ܆ ܛܒ ܒܗ ܒܡܘܬܐ ܕܒܗܡ ܠܚܝܐ.
36. ܘܐܢ ܬܐܡܪ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܕܢܦܫܗ ܡܢܗ ܒܐܘܪܚܐ ܐܘ ܒܫܘܒܪܐ ܐܠܐ
ܢܐܡܪ. ܢܬܠܡܕ. ܘܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܒܡܢܗ ܢܬܠܘܫ܆ ܘܒܠܒܗ ܢܦܫ
ܠܠܗܐ.
37. ܘܒܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܠܐ ܢܬܚܙܐ. ܘܠܐ ܢܫܪܘܒ ܘܠܐ ܢܓܠܠ. ܘܠܐ ܬܐܡܬܐ
ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ.
38. ܘܬܬܠܡܕ ܘܠܐ ܢܥܘܠ. ܘܬܬܒܠܒܠ ܘܠܐ ܢܒܠܘܒ. ܦܩܣ
ܕܬܐܟܠ ܗܠܟܝܢ ܘܦܓܪܐ ܒܗܡ ܦܓܪܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܕܬܬܥܝܩ ܚܕܐ ܡܢ
ܗܠܟܝܢ ܕܢܦܫܐ.
39. ܘܕܝܠܐ ܒܗܡ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܬܐܡܪ. ܐܠܐ ܢܫܒܩ ܐܦ ܟܕ ܐܬܠܐܘܗܝ ܙܒܢܐ܆
ܕܬܠܐܕܡ ܐܝܟ ܚܢܢܐ.
40. ܘܠܐ ܕܢܚܡ ܢܦܫܗ ܒܚܕܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܟܝܢ ܕܒܠܒܡܐ.
41. ܘܢܬܠܡܕ ܠܒܢܝܫܐ ܘܡܢ ܫܘܒܚܗܘܢ ܢܪܚܩ. ܦܩܐ ܗܘ ܗܢܐ
ܕܙܐܕ ܙܦܐ ܠܐܚܝܐ. ܐܘ ܡܒܐ ܪܚܡ ܒܪܫܗ܆ ܦܩܣ ܒܟܝ ܕܬܫܒܩ
ܒܒܪܫܡ ܓܘܡܪܐ ܕܢܘܪܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܬܬܓܠܐ ܕܪܝܫܐ.
42. ܘܢܦܩܘܢ ܙܕܝܩܘܗܝ ܒܟܠ ܒܠܒܗ. ܟܕ ܪܚܡ ܘܦܫܩ ܡܢ
ܒܠ ܒܪܢܫ.

43. Let him guard against abundant speech, because this extinguishes the fiery stirrings in his heart which originate in God.
44. Let him flee from finding fault with associates and strangers as from a vicious lion!
45. Let him not pass in the vicinity of those who are wrathful or contentious, lest his heart be filled with anger and the darkness of error reign in his soul.
46. Let him not dwell with the boastful, lest the activity of the Holy Spirit be removed from his soul and it become a dwelling for all wicked passions.
47. If you observe all of these admonitions and engage at all times in thinking about God, truly in a short time your soul will be able to see the light of Christ in itself and never again will it become blind. To Him be glory from all who love Him. Amen.

43. ܘܡܢ ܣܓܝܐܘܬܐ ܡܡܫܟܠܠ ܕܢܘܗܪ܆ ܡܛܠܠ ܕܗܘ ܡܕܒܪ ܡܢ
ܠܟܠ ܙ̈ܩܒܐ ܢܘܗ̈ܪܐ ܢܒܗܩܘܢ ܒܐܠܗܘܬܐ.

44. ܘܡܢ ܕܕܢܚܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܒܬܠܬܐ ܢܘܗ̈ܪܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܐܘܪܐ ܦܪ̈ܘܫܐ
ܒܪ̈ܘܡ.

45. ܘܒܡܒܘܥܐܐ ܕܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܘܬܘܪ̈ܐ ܠܐ ܒܥܒܪ܆ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܦܠܓ ܠܒܗ
ܒܫܡܝܐ ܘܢܬܒܠܚ ܒܢܦܫܗ ܣܘܥܪܐ ܕܐܬܒܥܐ.

46. ܘܒܗܝ ܡܦܘܪ̈ܫܐ ܠܐ ܒܥܒܪ܆ ܕܠܐ ܠܬܪܬܝܢ ܡܬܦܠܓܬܐ ܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ
ܡܢ ܢܦܫܗ܆ ܘܬܗܘܐ ܒܡܫܪܐ ܠܒܠܐ ܚܝ̈ܐ ܒܟܝ̈ܢܐ܀

47. ܗܠܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܙܗܝܪܐ ܐܢ ܐܢܬ ܐܘ ܐܚܝ ܒܪܢܫܐ. ܘܐܬܒܝܢ
ܒܡܠܟܘܬ ܒܥܘܗܕܢܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ܆ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܒܡܫܟܚܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܗ
ܒܟܝܢܗ ܕܠܐܒܐ ܗܘ ܒܗ ܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܘܒܟܠܗܝܢ
ܠܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܢܐ. ܕܒܗ ܡܘܒܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܙܢ̈ܝܐ ܐܡܝܢ.

Letter 19

[On poverty and the narrow way,
and that we must not be anxious for bodily things]

1. Indeed before our freedom has been proven by endurance,[1] we seek rest for our souls. And we make the Lord of all to serve our stubborn will, but we do not obey his will. He has shown us by his painful and tormented journey how we should follow Him if truly we are determined to arrive where He is. But we look with desire on these things which draw us backwards.
2. He and his did not possess nourishment for a day, but we seek to provide necessities for years. He has admonished us not to be anxious about tomorrow,[2] but our doubt seeks to provide our necessities far in advance. He said that *He has nowhere to lay his head*,[3] yet to satisfy the madness of our desire we build for ourselves an elegant shelter. Woe to us, rational beings, we seek decoration from what is not able to provide it! We have no shame before Paul walking barefoot and stripped, while we rejoice in black shoes and assuage our bodies with soft things. Paul disfigured his body that he might be beautiful to the One who had chosen him, while we wretched ones beautify our bodies to be ugly before the Beautiful One.

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[1] cf. Lk. 21:19.
[2] cf. Matt. 6:34.
[3] cf. Matt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58.

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ܕܠܡܫܬܪܐ ܥܠ ܡܫܪܝܘܬܐ܆ ܘܐܘܪܚܐ ܦܫܝܛܬܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܕܐܪܟ ܕܦܠܝܚܬܐ.

1. ܡܕܡ ܓܝܪ ܕܐܬܐܡܪ ܒܐܪܘܢ ܒܡܫܪܝܘܬܐ ܝܗܒܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܚܕܝܢ. ܘܡܛܪܐ ܥܠ ܠܒܝܫܐ ܚܕܝܢ ܕܢܦܩܢܝܢ܆ ܘܥܠܘ ܕܢܫܡ ܢܦܩܢܘܢ ܠܒܝܫܘܗܝ. ܝܗܒ ܒܡܫܪܝܘܬܐ ܒܡܝܠܐ ܘܐܦܝܬܐ܆ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܪܐ ܒܐܪܘܗܝ܆ ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܣܝܡܐ ܒܟ ܕܠܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܬܐܘܗܝ ܢܦܫܗܝ. ܘܝܗܒ ܒܡܘܒܠ ܕܒܡܫܬܐܪ ܢܦܫ ܒܟ܆ ܒܪܘܚܬܐ ܝܬܝܪܬܐ܀

2. ܗܘ ܒܟܡ ܕܥܠܘ ܫܒܪܐ ܒܡܘܡܐ ܠܐ ܩܕܡ ܗܘܐ܆ ܘܝܗܒ ܡܕܘܝܐ ܠܡܢܝܐ ܠܡܫܡܫ ܚܕܝܢ. ܐܘܪ ܕܡܝܪ ܠܐ ܐܬܪܦܐ܆ ܘܦܠܓܘܬܐ ܠܡܬܐܝܐ ܝܡܝܢܬܐ ܚܕܝܐ ܒܟ. ܒܟܠ ܒܗܘ ܐܡܐ ܕܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܐܝܟܢ ܐܡܪ. ܘܝܗܒ ܠܡܫܘܡܠܝܢ ܦܪܘܬܐ ܕܪܓܠܐ܆ ܗܟܘܪܐ ܡܫܒܠܐ ܚܝܝܢ. ܘܐ ܒܟ ܠܡܫܒܠܐ ܕܪܓܠܬܐ ܡܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܝܕܥ ܒܪܓܠܬܐ ܚܕܝܢ. ܘܠܐ ܚܘܐܝܢ ܡܢ ܦܘܠܘܫ܆ ܕܝܗܒ ܘܡܪܬܘܬܐ ܡܫܠܡ܆ ܘܝܗܒ ܒܫܐܘܐ ܡܫܝܪܐ ܝܗܝܒ܆ ܘܥܠܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܦܓܪܐ ܡܝܬܝܢ. ܦܘܠܘܫ ܡܫܝܐ ܦܓܪܗ ܕܢܦܪ ܠܗܘ ܕܓܢܣܗܘܢ܆ ܘܝܗܒ ܕܘܟܐ ܡܫܦܪܝܢ ܦܓܪܝܢ ܕܢܫܬܐ ܡܢ ܫܦܝܪܐ܀

3. The son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple who knows the One who is from the beginning and has even seen and touched Him and proclaims Him:[4] he is sad and his appearance altered, being despised for his tattered worn out clothing, begging pieces of bread for a meal, and showing himself as an unknown to those who do not know him. While I, feeble and negligent, not able to proceed after him on account of my laziness, present myself as a just one, worthy of being provided for by many. And I retort to the one who advises me: "All my passions have not been satisfied, and know that their fullness is the will of the Lord." I might say, therefore, that Paul and all the company of luminous beings who have concluded their lives in terrors and troubles, considered as refuse by everyone,[5] even thought nothing of by despised persons: perhaps have they not pursued the will of God? But it is their Lord Himself whom I must look on to learn the truth they embraced.
4. For they have heard it said: *I am the Way.*[6] Therefore also they have reached the end valiantly and have come to Him. I understand that from these bitter things his sweetness flows; I will rejoice in my troubles that He may gladden me by his manifestation. Indeed, while I bear his marks in my members,[7] I rejoice that what He endured might be found in me.
5. For a day's grievous suffering that you bear for Him, in exchange you will receive the world of light. If you endure a little hunger because of love for Him, also the desire for Him will torture you to see his face. If darkness covers your face from suffering hardships for Him, He will make you shine with his glory for a length of time without end. If you strip off these things of yours, He will clothe you with his light and will hide from your view these things of yours. If you give up these things which you possess, you will possess Him in your soul forever. But more than suffering hardships, the Lord of all seeks integrity of purpose.[8]

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[4] cf. 1 Jn. 1:1–2.

[5] cf. 1Cor. 4:13.

[6] Jn. 14:6.

[7] cf. Gal. 6:17.

[8] Integrity of purpose (*trîṣût nîšâ*), considered by John as a gift of discernment invoked of God and granted by Him, rather than as a personal acquisition. See Beulay, ES, 86–89.

3. ܟܕ ܐܬܝܬ ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܪܒܝܫܬܐ ܕܢܦܠ ܠܘܬܗ ܕܡܢ ܟܪܝܗܘܬܐ: ܘܐܦ
ܐܬܝܗܒ ܘܚܘܫܒܐ ܘܡܦܩܕܢ: ܕܡܕܢ ܘܡܦܩܕ ܐܬܝܗܒ ܘܚܒܠ
ܕܬܘܡܐ ܒܟܢ̈ܫܬܐ ܘܢܓܪ ܡܛܠ ܠܡܪܘܬܐ: ܘܠܐ ܢܒܥܐ ܟܠܠ
ܢܘܟ̈ܪܝܐ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܡܢܘܐ. ܘܐܢܐ ܡܫܠܐ ܘܡܦܠܛܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܟܠܗܘܢ
ܡܢ ܚܢܢܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܐܫܟܚܬ. ܘܙܕܩܐ ܕܡܢ ܚܫ̈ܚܬܐ ܦܘܐ
ܕܠܦܪܢܣ ܢܦܫ ܡܢܘܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܥܠܝܦ ܐܢܐ ܥܠܠ ܦܠܚܘܢ
ܘܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ. ܕܐܢܐ ܚܝܒ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܐܬܦܠܚܘ: ܢܦܠ ܗܘܝܬ
ܕܡܟ̈ܬܒܘܢ ܕܙܒܢܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܡܪܝܐ. ܡܛܠ ܐܝܟ ܠܝ ܕܐܡܪ
ܦܘܠܘܣ ܘܥܠܘܗܝ ܚܙܘܐ ܕܗܘܬ: ܕܒܟܢܫܬܐ ܘܬܘܪ̈ܦܐ ܦܠܚܘܗ
ܚܝ̈ܘܗܝ: ܘܐܝܟ ܢܦܫܐ ܠܚܠܝܡܘܬܐ ܚܫܝܒܝܢ ܗܘܘ: ܘܠܐ ܚܫܝܒܐ
ܟܪ̈ܝܟܠܐ ܚܫܝܒܝܢ ܗܘܘ: ܡܟܪ ܠܗ ܒܪܝܟܢ ܠܠܗܐ ܪܘܦܬܝܢ
ܗܘܘ: ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܝ ܕܐܚܘܪ ܒܡܪܗܘܢ: ܘܫܠܘܦ ܫܪܪܐ ܕܐܝܬܝܗ܀
4. ܫܡܥܬܘܢ ܓܒܪ ܕܐܡܪ. ܕܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܘܪܚܐ. ܡܛܠ ܛܪܐܢܐ ܦܠܚܘܗ
ܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ ܘܦܪܝܘ ܠܗܘܢ. ܐܦܠܚܝܢܠܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܪ̈ܝܢ
ܢܒܥܐ ܚܠܗܘܢ. ܢܓܪ ܐܢܐ ܒܬܘܪ̈ܦܐ. ܕܢܚܝܚ ܒܚܝܗ. ܟܝ
ܓܒܪ ܛܒܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܫܘܡܠܝܗ ܒܗܘܕ̈ܝܐ: ܙܥܪ ܐܢܐ ܕܫܒܝ̈ܚܝ ܒܗ
ܗܠܝܢ ܕܦܩܕܬ܀
5. ܒܚܝܠܐ ܒܫܡܐ ܕܗܘܡܐ ܕܐܠܗܝܢ ܥܠܠ ܐܦ̈ܝܗܘܢ: ܒܥܠܡ ܢܗܘܪܐ
ܢܠܦܘܗܘܢ ܢܦܫ ܐܢܐ. ܠܝ ܠܦܫܪ ܦܥܠܠ ܒܫܠܐ ܢܠܦ
ܢܘܒܗܘ: ܐܦ ܙܒܠܘܗܝ ܠܦܫܩ ܠܡܫܚܐ ܦܪܘܩܗ. ܠܝ ܕܠܝܕܐ
ܒܫܡܐ ܒܦܪܘܩܢ ܒܚܫ̈ܠܐ ܘܢܠܦܘܗܝ: ܢܗܘܪ ܒܡܘܒܚܗ
ܢܗܝܪܐ ܘܠܐ ܦܫܩܐ. ܠܝ ܠܫܒܚ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܝܢ: ܢܬܒܥܘܢ
ܢܗܘܪܗ ܘܚܝܠܐ ܡܢܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܝܢ. ܠܝ ܠܫܒܘܩ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܠܐ
ܐܝܟ: ܠܐܬܚܘܝܘ ܠܗ ܒܢܫܢ ܘܠܟܠܟܘܢ. ܗܟܝܠ ܡܢ ܒܫ̈ܠܐ
ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܢܒܝܐ ܟܦܠܐ ܡܪܐ ܟܠܗ܀

6. Heaven and earth do not limit God, and He dwells and shows Himself in the intellect which keeps itself pure. The Cherubim and the Seraphim look modestly at the glory of his Greatness, but the pure soul sees this glory within itself without a veil. When the intellect has been purified of the obscurity of error, it becomes a heaven for the angels of light. Where the glory of their Lord has been revealed by love, there also they cry out their "Holy, Holy, Holy."[9] A brother truly affirmed in my presence: "When I take care of my soul, with the help of God who strengthens me, I see his revelation in my heart in an ineffable glory. Then also the holy angels appear to me in an incomprehensible mystery and they show their love for me which goes beyond telling.[10] But at the times of my negligence, they appear to me with a cheerless countenance."
7. *Blessed are the pure in heart for* in their heart *they will see God.*[11] In the place which has been purified, the glory of the Pure One is seen. This is the Kingdom of which He said: "It is hidden within you."[12] All who have exchanged their world for the desire of Him and have abandoned their corrupted life have found as world for themselves, the Creator of worlds. Indeed they do not perceive division (between day and night) because the darkness is not named in his place.

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[9] There is a beautiful passage in John's Discourses concerning the sounds of the angels: "Let no one suppose when he hears the cry "Holy, Holy, Holy" of the spirits or their ethereal sounds that it is the echo of something celestial…the amazing thing is that in the vision of God there is no sound; their utterances are their wondrous impulses: that is, their substance pulsating entirely in the Spirit the Paraclete in the likeness of some fervent heat of inexpressible brilliance." Found in Discourse 3, "On the demon of fornication," Vat. 124, 287b. See also Letter 31.4.

[10] In the Discourses John describes this love of the angels: "<The guardian angel> shows his love and affection for him, and how much he rejoices in his care, and he speaks in him impulses of love, warm encouragements, and compliments and makes the heart soar with ardor in them, and a person is enkindled and inflamed with his love and is fervent in speaking freely with him…." See Discourse 7, Vat. 124, 304a.

[11] Matt. 5:8.

[12] cf. Lk. 17:21.

6. ܠܐܠܗܐ ܫܡܝܐ ܘܐܪܥܐ ܠܐ ܡܣܦܩܝܢ ܠܗ. ܘܒܗܘܢܐ ܕܢܛܪ
ܕܟܝܘܬܐ ܥܡܪ ܘܡܬܢܝܚ. ܒܪ̈ܘܟܐ ܘܡܫܪ̈ܦܐ ܒܚܒܝܒܘܬܐ ܢܚܙܢ
ܒܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܪܒܘܬܗ: ܘܢܦܫܐ ܕܟܝܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܐܚܫܢܬܐ ܢܚܙܐ
ܫܘܒܚܗ ܒܫܠܡܘܬܗ. ܡܐ ܕܐܬܕܟܝ ܗܘܢܐ ܡܢ ܚܫܒܐ ܕܛܘܥܝܝ:
ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܫܡܝܐ ܠܡܠ̈ܐܟܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ. ܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܬܓܠܝ ܫܘܒܚܗ
ܘܡܪܗܘܢ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ: ܐܝܟ ܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ ܦܬܚܝܢ ܡܦܘܩ̈ܗܘܢ.
ܫܪܝܪܐܝܬ ܕܐܡܪ ܡܕܡܝ ܐܝܟ ܚܕ ܗܘܝܐ. ܕܟܪܟܝܐ ܕܢܪܦ ܐܢܐ
ܕܢܦܫ ܒܟܘܪܝ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܕܡܢܚܠܐ ܠܝ: ܢܪܐ ܐܢܐ
ܡܬܓܠܝܢܘܬܗ ܒܠܒܝ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܡܠܠܐ. ܘܗܘܝ
ܕܢܚܢ ܠܒܝ ܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ ܡܠ̈ܐܟܐ ܡܕܝܩ̈ܐ ܒܙܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܘܫܩ:
ܘܡܢܘܢ ܠܝ ܪܚܡܬܗܘܢ ܕܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܒܥܪܐ ܠܬܘܝܐ. ܘܒܪܒܝܐ
ܕܡܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ ܒܦܪ̈ܨܘܦܐ ܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܠܝ ܡܬܚܘܝܢ܀
7. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܟܝܢ ܒܠܒܗܘܢ. ܕܒܠܒܗܘܢ ܚܙܝܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ.
ܒܐܬܪܐ ܓܝܪ ܕܐܬܕܟܝ: ܒܗ ܡܬܚܙܐ ܫܘܒܚܗ ܕܪܒܐ. ܗܕܐ ܗܝ
ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܠܓܘ ܡܢܟܘܢ ܡܫܬܟܚܐ. ܒܠܐ ܕܢܠܦܘ
ܠܟܡܪܗܘܢ ܒܪܓܬܗ ܘܐܪܚܩܘ ܡܢ ܚܫ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܚܫ̈ܠܐ: ܐܬܚܙܝܘ
ܠܗܘܢ ܒܠܒܐ ܠܥܪܐ ܟܬ̈ܒܐ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܢܚܙܝܢ ܦܫ̈ܩܬܐ.
ܡܛܠ ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܒܐܬܪܗ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܘ܀

LETTER 20

[On swinish gluttony]

1. The hunter who hunts his prey spreads the bait on his snare and so he is able to capture it. The Rebel captures the monk by his belly. Consider your father, how his beguiler deceived him,[1] that you might learn how to do battle with him. The solitary who fills his belly is a shepherd of swine and his herd is the worst kind. But the solitary who keeps a rule is the shepherd of the flock of Christ and he is greatly loved by the Master of the shepherds.
2. My brothers, the passions are knit together; if you are enslaved to this passion, you will be perforce a slave to its companion; but the fount of all of them is gluttony. Woe to the solitary whom sleep overcomes! It is certain that this one is a slave of the ravenous bear of gluttony. Do not say: "I fasted one day or two and again overwhelming sleep assailed me." Those who have not had an orderly experience of fasting speak like this.[2] That limbs unaccustomed to fasting may be quickly paralyzed, I am completely convinced. But if you hold to a rule of little food and do not change the rule for unnecessary reasons, you will seek rest for your body, but you will not find it. And when you lie down, your head covered, you will find yourself awake. By all means you constantly have need of this rule. Do not overfill your belly, lest fornication torture you. Do not greatly weaken your body, lest your enemy make you weary. Hold to a rule and, behold, henceforth you will go forward on the royal way and your journey will be without fear.

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[1] cf. Gen. 3:6, 7.

[2] The purpose of fasting is seen by John to be the purification of the passions of the soul. But something characteristic of his thinking is that he also considers fasting as enabling the body itself to participate in the mystical life through a spiritualization of the senses. See Beulay, ES, 71–76.

ܕܒܫ̈ܝܢ: ܘܒܠܟ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܒܪܫܐ ܚܕܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ.

1. ܓܢܒܐ ܕܓܢܒ. ܓܒܪܐ: ܒܠܝܠܝܐ ܥܒܪ ܒܠܟ ܦܫܗ: ܘܗܘܡ ܡܫܡܫ ܓܐܪ
ܠܗ: ܘܚܕܝܐ ܒܥܒܕܘܗܝ ܓܐܪ ܠܗ ܡܪܘܕܐ. ܒܐܒܘܟ ܐܬܟܢܐ
ܒܥܝܢܐ ܕܝܘܗ ܢܥܘܠܘܢ: ܕܐܬܠܟ ܐܢܬ ܐܝܟ ܠܐܡܪܝ ܒܥܡܗ.
ܚܕܝܐ ܕܡܠܠ ܒܪܫܗ: ܪܒܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܚܕ̈ܝܐ: ܘܦܫܝܩ ܒܝܫܐ
ܡܪܟܢܬܗ. ܚܕܝܐ ܕܢܬܪ ܬܒܥܐ: ܪܒܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܒܥܘܗ ܕܡܥܚܢܐ:
ܘܬܒ ܪܢܝܡ ܠܗ ܪܒ ܪ̈ܒܘܬܐ܀

2. ܒܢ̈ܝܕܐ ܒܐܒܘܟܡ ܚܝܐ ܐܢܬܝ. ܠܟ ܒܗܘܢ ܚܝܐ ܠܡܬܒܥܘܟ: ܒܒܪ
ܐܘܟܘܗ ܡܢ ܡܬܪ ܒܒܕܐ ܗܘܐ ܐܢܬ. ܒܪܡ ܡܒܚܢܐ ܕܒܠܘܗܝ
ܪܒܘܬܐ ܒܪܫܐ ܗܘ. ܘܐܦ ܠܗ ܠܚܝܕܐ ܕܫܒܬܐ ܪܒܢܐ ܠܗ.
ܕܗܘܢܐ ܚܕܝܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܫܡܫܐ ܗܘ ܕܕܟܐ ܦܪܘܚܬܐ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܒܪܫܐ.
ܠܐ ܬܐܡܪ ܕܪܫܬܐ ܚܫܒܐ ܘܐܪܝܡ ܘܐܘܒ ܫܒܬܐ ܒܒܟ ܫܒܬܐ
ܬܡܪܐ. ܐܝܟܢ ܕܠܐ ܫܡܥܗ ܢܫܝܐ ܡܬܒܥܫܐ ܐܡܪܝܢ ܗܘܐ.
ܕܡܫܬܪܝܢ ܗܕܝ̈ܫܐ ܒܐܒܝܐ ܐܒܘܪܐ ܠܐ ܡܒܥܝܐ: ܬܒ ܡܦܫܩ ܐܢܬ.
ܐܝܟ ܠܐܝܟܘܢ ܬܒܥܐ ܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܫܒܥܪܐ: ܘܠܐ ܬܦܫܒܟ ܬܒܥܐ
ܒܬܠܟܬܐ ܠܐ ܘܟܬ̈ܠܬܐ: ܟܒܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܗ ܒܢܝܚ ܦܫܝܩ. ܘܠܐ
ܡܫܡܫ ܐܢܬ. ܘܒܝ ܢܦܫܟ ܐܢܬ ܘܪܫܡ ܡܟܫܦ: ܒܢܪܐ
ܡܫܬܡܥ ܐܢܬ. ܘܫܡ ܒܐܡܝܢܗ ܫܒܝܠܐ ܐܬܠܝܡ ܒܒܢܝܗ. ܠܐ
ܬܐܠܐ ܒܪܫܡ ܦܫܝܩ. ܕܠܐ ܬܦܫܡ ܐܘܬܐ. ܠܐ ܬܐܡܢܠܟ ܦܫܝܩ
ܦܫܝܩ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܠܚܡ ܦܫܘܪܡ. ܬܒܥܐ ܐܝܟܘܢ: ܘܗܘܐ ܡܗܠܟ
ܒܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܪܕܐ ܐܢܬ: ܘܠܐ ܕܒܠܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܡܪܕܝܬܟ܀

3. As for one who is ill with a high fever and suffers severe pain, if you bring him foods which stir up desire at their sight, his abdomen loathes them and he rejects them; so also for the natural desire of fornication if it is weakened by lack of sufficient food. And if the demons bring to mind the shapes and faces which stir passion, we will remain without lasting injury, our conscience loathing the desire of fornication because the natural passion is found in a state of weakness. By poor and insufficient food, the passions are weakened; and at the remembrance of God,[3] they perish and die. It is the sword which kills them.
4. Our Lord Jesus Christ, slay the passionate desires of your servants with the desire of You. Amen! My Lord, cast your holy fire on the earth of our soul,[4] that it might burn all the choking thorns that hamper the holy seed which was sown in our field;[5] so that the seed might produce fruit in us at the three levels[6] in which consists all of the nature of rational creatures, whether spiritual or corporeal.

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[3] Remembrance of God (*ʿuhdânâ dalâhâ*), see Letter 50. See also Beulay, ES, 124–142. John's writings evoke later Byzantine Hesychast experience without reflecting any of their techniques. A possible allusion to technique may be found in Letter 36.6 where the invocation of Father is used to help direct the intellect (*hawnâ*) within the heart. More study may also reveal parallels with Islamic tradition and the Moslem use of *dikr* as noted by Beulay in his "Formes de Lumière et Lumière sans forme, Le thème de la Lumière dans la Mystique de Jean de Dalyatha," MG, 133.

[4] cf. Lk. 12:49.

[5] cf. Matt. 13:7; Mk. 4:7.

[6] For John the three levels (*mšuhtê* or *taksê*) are: of the body, of the soul, and of the spirit. They are not separate natures but different orientations of the soul. This tripartite schema of the spiritual life has its roots in St. Paul, but is first elaborated on by John the Solitary. See discussion in P. Harb, "Doctrine Spirituelle de Jean le Solitaire," *PdO* 2 (1971): 225–60. See also Bruce Bradley "Jean le Solitaire," *DSpir* 8 (1974): 768–770. Isaac of Nineveh refers to it explicitly, see Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, chap. 20. For applications of the doctrine to various other East Syrian writers, see P. Beulay, LM, 97–124. This idea is developed in other Letters of John: 23, 34, 40, 51.

3. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܒܟܘܪܗܢܐ ܕܐܫܬܐ ܡܫܚܬܐ ܘܡܫܪܘܠ܆ ܠܐ
ܬܦܪܟ ܠܗ ܥܢܝ̈ܢܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܢܐ ܦܓܥܬܐ ܒܟܘܪܗܢܗ܆ ܥܒܪܐ
ܬܐܪܬܗ ܘܠܐ ܡܦܟܠ ܠܗܘܢ܆ ܗܟܢܐ ܘܦܓܥܬܐ ܒܚܛܝܬܐ ܕܚܛܝܬܐ܆
ܐܝܟܘ ܕܬܬܡܣܟܠ ܡܢ ܟܘܪܗܢܐ ܡܬܟܪܗܬܐ. ܘܢܦܠܘܢ ܩ̈ܠܝܐ
ܒܟܘܪܗܢܐ ܕܕܡܘ̈ܬܐ ܘܦܬ̈ܓܡܐ ܡܕܒܪ̈ܢ ܚܫܐ܆ ܚܢ ܟܠܟܠܐ ܢܟܝܠܐ
ܡܦܩܝܢ܆ ܟܕ ܥܒܪܐ ܬܐܪܬܐ ܡܢ ܦܓ̈ܥܐ ܐܣܘܬܐ. ܡܛܠ
ܕܡܫܝܚܘܬܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܚܫܐ ܟܝܢܐ. ܟܕ ܥܢܝ̈ܢܬܐ ܡܒܛܠܬܐ
ܘܟܪ̈ܝܗܬܐ ܡܬܦܢܝܢ ܚܫ̈ܐ. ܘܒܟܘܪܗܢܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܦܫܩܝܢ
ܘܦܢܝܢ. ܗܢܘ ܦܫܩܐ ܦܬܓܡܗܘܢ܀

4. ܡܪܝ ܢܣܘܟ ܡܡܣܝܢܐ܆ ܐܡܝܟ ܠܪܥܝܢܟ ܚܫ̈ܐ ܡܢ ܒܟ̈ܪܝܗܝܢ
ܠܪܥܬܐ ܕܟܝ ܐܡܝܢ. ܐܪܡܐ ܡܪܝ ܢܘܪܝ ܡܣܝܡܬܐ ܒܐܪܥܐ ܢܦܫܝ.
ܘܢܐܡܪܘܢ ܡܣܝܚ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܠ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܡܟܘܟܒܘܬܗ ܕܪܘܚܐ
ܡܕܝܬܐ ܕܐ̈ܘܪܚܐ ܠܡܫܪܐ. ܢܕܥܢ ܟܝ ܦܐܪ̈ܐ ܠܡܬܟ̈ܠܝܢ
ܡܬܡܫ̈ܚܬܐ܆ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܦܐܪܝ ܟܠܗ ܟܝܢܐ ܕܡܟ̈ܠܠܐ ܕܪܘܚ ܘܕܦܓܪ܀

5. In conclusion, whoever fills his belly and is enslaved by this passion, he is a slave who is in bondage to all the passions. And when this is conquered, we will easily conquer all of them. This is the source of fornication; money is sought because of it and also human glory so that honor may abound. Anger, the untamed dog, barks because of it since they do not give it food. Wandering in villages and with friends is also to fill our belly. In short, all murders and all evil deeds are done because of it, so that Sheol is filled up. All of this is done by the destroying she-wolf. Let it be tortured lest it torture us. Because the more we fill it, dung abounds: these then are the stinking fruits which appear from it. Others appear from it which have been previously mentioned and they are likewise abhorrent, depriving us of eternal life when they are ripe. Let us not be fools who destroy their life, but let us use wisely these things which only last a day.
6. As for me, my conscience strongly reproves me when I consider those who do not use these things fittingly. But when they are full of their desires, and the corruption of these things is placed before their eyes, they are ashamed of it and turn their faces from it. Do they not recall the experience of this foulness and then feel shame at it? You see, my brother, that all worldly work comes to this. So then, direct your life as one who is wise in the use of what is from the world and of which you have need.
7. O Christ, Source of our life, raise us beyond a worldly work that we see to have such an end. Rather, those things whose fruits appear to You as desirable, and which also the Servants[7] of your Holiness rejoice in: let them be our work and our meditation in this limited time which You have given us to prove our freedom. And on account of this ministry, may we come to You with unveiled confidence, by your mercy. Amen.

[7] Servants (*mšâmšanê*), ministering angels.

.5 ܫܡܥܐ܆ ܕܗ̇ܘ ܕܡܛܐ ܒܪܫܗ ܘܠܗܘܐ ܚܝܐ ܐܬܠܒܒܢ܆ ܟܒܪ ܗܘ
ܕܗܘ ܠܗ ܡܟܝܢ ܠܟܠܠܐ ܚܝܝܢ. ܘܟܕ ܗܘܐ ܢܕܥܐ܆ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ
ܒܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܙܥܘܪܐ. ܗܘܝܘ ܕܟܠܐ ܕܐܝܬܝܐ. ܒܣܟܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗ.
ܫܘܡܠܝܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗ܆ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ ܐܝܬܝܗ. ܙܥܘܪܐ ܒܟܠܟܐ ܠܐ
ܡܬܟܢܫ܆ ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗ ܢܟܣ ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܗ. ܦܘܝܐ ܕܒܣܘܪܐ
ܘܟܠܗ ܚܝܝܢ ܕܢܦܠܐ ܒܪܫܗ. ܘܫܡܥܐ܆ ܕܟܠܐ ܩܛܠܐ ܘܟܠܐ ܒܝܫ
ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗ ܕܫܘܠܐ ܕܬܬܦܠܐ. ܗܟܢ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܦܓܪܐ ܕܐܟܠܬܐ
ܦܪܘܫܬܐ. ܠܦܠܝܛ ܗܘ. ܕܠܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܡܦܝܣܐ ܠܢ. ܡܛܠܠ ܕܟܕ
ܦܫܝܢ ܦܠܚܝܢ ܠܗ ܐܓܐ ܦܫܝܚܝܢ. ܗܟܢ ܐܝܟ ܦܐܪܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ
ܕܡܢܗ ܡܬܝܠܕ. ܒܝܕܥܬܗܘܢ ܐܬܚܙܝܘ ܘܗܟܢ ܐܝܕܐ ܕܡܢܗ
ܡܬܐܠܕ ܕܡܢ ܠܐܝܠܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܗܘܝܐ ܐܬܚܙܝܘ ܠܓܒܪܐ܆ ܡܢ ܚܝܐ
ܕܠܟܠܢ ܢܟܠܝܢ ܠܢ ܒܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗܘܢ. ܡܟܝܠ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܢ
ܫܘܠܐ ܩܘܕܡܝ ܚܝܝܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܢܬܐܢܣ ܐܝܟ ܢܩܫܬܐ ܒܗܘܠܝܢ
ܕܫܟܢ ܢܘܡܐ܀

.6 ܐܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܛܒ ܫܦܝܪܐ ܠܟ ܠܐܪܐܐ܆ ܒܝ ܡܬܦܫܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܗܘܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ
ܦܠܚܐܠ ܡܬܐܢܣܝܢ ܒܗܘܢ. ܒܝ ܟܡ ܕܡܦܣܩܝܢ ܒܗܘܢ
ܦܠܚܘܬܗܘܢ܆ ܡܬܐܡܪܝܢ ܡܢܗ ܒܚܝܝܗܘܢ ܢܘܟܠܝܢ܆ ܘܫܘܠܡ
ܡܢܗ ܘܦܘܦܝܢ ܐܦܝܗܘܢ. ܠܐ ܟܝ ܫܦܝܪ ܕܡܛܠܗ ܢܫܝܐ
ܕܫܪܝܪܘܬܗܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܡܬܐܟܢܝܢ܆ ܢܕܝܠܐ ܐܝܟ܆ ܕܠܗܘܐ ܒܠܗ
ܦܠܚܝܢ ܠܚܕܐ ܫܢܝ. ܡܟܝܢ ܐܝܟ ܢܦܫܐ ܕܫܢ ܚܝܝ ܒܐܠܗܝܢ
ܕܡܢܗ ܠܚܠܘܢ ܫܒܝܩ ܐܠܐ܀

.7 ܡܫܝܚܐ ܪܫܐ ܚܝܝ ܫܠܠ ܠܝ ܡܢ ܦܠܚܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܫܘܠܡܗ ܢܕܝܥ.
ܘܐܠܝܢ ܕܦܐܪܐ ܕܡܢܗܘܢ ܩܝܣܐ ܠܟܝ ܡܬܝܠܕ܆ ܘܐܦ ܠܡܦܩܦܩܢ
ܡܬܕܥܐ ܡܢܝܢ܆ ܒܗܘܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܦܠܚܝܢ ܘܗܘܦܟܐ܆ ܒܗܘܠܐ ܐܟܠܐ
ܡܬܐܟܠܐ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܠܝ ܠܚܘܦܢ ܚܠܪܘܬܝ. ܘܢܦܫܢ ܡܢܗ
ܒܦܐܪܘܫܘܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܠܐܝܟ ܠܗܐܝ ܒܪܝܫܝܬ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 21

[On irascibilty and on vigilance]

1. Woe to the irascible monk whose heart is a dwelling of vipers, for each day he drinks from its venom! He who is a babbler drives himself from the Lord because grace does not rest upon him. How long will the slanderer find a house that he might erect for himself without God's covering? With whom will the wrathful one be at peace who always troubles his heart and makes the Spirit of God depart from it and the scorpion gives birth there and multiplies?
2. Flee from the one with two tongues who shoots poisonous arrows into the heart of his listeners. Avoid proud persons who wage war with God. Remain alien to all rich people whose work is completely idolatrous. Do not be a companion to those who are contentious lest Legion[1] lodge within your house.[2] Guard against the wrathful person who is himself the devil incarnate. Close your ears and flee from anyone who praises you in your presence lest he strip you of God and clothe you in the rags with which he is clad. God does not dwell with the lover of power nor should you dwell with him. The one who abides by his own will when there is no necessity is an enemy of the will of God. The insolent one is like a serpent and his food is dust.[3] Whoever raises his voice, it is certain that Christ is not in him.
3. Keep these admonitions of your friend that you might be preserved by them.

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[1] cf. Mk. 5:9.

[2] cf. Lk. 12:49. In some passages, John comes close to saying what is described in the homilies of Macarius, i.e., that the devil can penetrate the soul. Whether or not this ever becomes, even in Macarius, a Messalian interpretation of the Holy Spirit living with the devil in the soul is unclear. But in his Discourses John says clearly that the demons can never know the thoughts of the soul. See Beulay, ES, 152–174, esp. 159–160. John has, in fact, a great deal to say about struggles with the devil. See Discourses 3–6, Vat. 124, 284a–304a.

[3] cf. Matt. 13:7; Mk. 4:7.

ܟܐ

ܕܡܫܡܫܢ ܘܚܕܐ ܟܠ ܕܫܠܬܐ ܘܟܠ ܙܗܝܪܘܬܐ.

1. ܘܦ ܠܗ ܠܒܚܝܪܐ ܦܘܠܬܐ. ܕܠܟܘܗ ܠܗܘܡܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܒܪܬܐ܆
ܕܠܟܘܢ ܦܠܬܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܢܐ. ܡܟܡܠܗ ܩܠܐ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܕܢܫ ܡܢ
ܡܪܢܐ ܕܗܟܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܦܟܝܐ ܟܟܠܘܗܝ. ܦܠܘܙܐ܆ ܠܐܡܠܟ ܡܡܟܚ
ܠܗ ܟܠܬܐ܆ ܕܗܘ ܠܗ ܡܡܝܡ ܕܠܐ ܠܬܠܟܝܠܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ.
ܢܡܠܬܐ ܟܡ ܡܢܗ ܢܡܠܝ܆ ܕܐܡܝ ܡܝܠܟܚ ܠܟܠܗ ܘܡܦܝܠܐ
ܡܢܗ ܠܪܘܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ܆ ܘܐܡܢ ܢܟܕܐ ܟܡܪܟܐ ܘܡܪܟܝܐ܀

2. ܟܪܘܡ ܡܢ ܐܘܪܝ ܟܡܝܠܐ. ܟܠܙܐ ܡܡܝܩܠܐ ܦܪܡܠܐ ܟܠܟܠܐ
ܕܢܩܠܘܗܝ. ܐܢܫ ܡܢ ܥܡ̈ܐ܆ ܕܡܪܟܐ ܟܟܝܡ ܟܡ ܠܐܠܗܐ.
ܢܡܪܢܐ ܗܘܝ ܟܟܠܐ ܟܠܡܪܐ܆ ܕܦܘܟܚܘܗܘܢ ܟܠܗ ܕܦܠܟܪܐ
ܗܘ. ܠܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܢܟܪܐ ܟܠܪܬܐ܆ ܕܠܐ ܠܝܡܪܐ ܟܠܚܘܢ ܟܠܘ
ܟܠܝ. ܐܪܘܗܘ ܡܢ ܐܟܠܬܐ܆ ܕܬܠܕܐ ܗܘ ܗܘܐ ܕܡܟܠܘܡ. ܡܢ ܦܡ
ܕܡܦܟܠܗܘ ܟܠܝ ܡܝܡܝ܆ ܦܟܪ ܐܕܢܝ ܘܟܪܘܡ. ܕܠܐ ܢܡܟܚ
ܡܚܝ ܠܐܠܗܐ܆ ܘܢܠܟܡܝ ܟܪܕܟܠܬܐ ܕܟܟܝܡ. ܟܪܢܡ ܙܢܡܘܬܐ
ܠܐ ܟܡܪ ܠܐܠܗܐ܆ ܐܦܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܝܡܪ ܟܡܗܘ. ܕܡܡܝܡ ܙܟܝܗܘ
ܟܐܡܟܝ ܕܠܐ ܟܠܙܐ܆ ܟܙܟܝ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܗܠܐܐ ܗܘ. ܡܪܢܐ ܟܢܗܘܢܐ
ܡܠܕܡܐ. ܘܡܐܟܘܟܠܬܗ ܟܦܪܐ ܗܘ. ܕܡܪܝܡ ܡܟܠܗ ܢܝܟܠ ܗܘ
ܕܡܡܢܐ ܟܢܠ ܟܗܘ܀

3. ܬܪ ܗܟܝܠ ܐܘܗܘܝ ܙܢܡܝ. ܕܟܗܘܢ ܠܠܬܪܬܐ܀

LETTER 22

1. Do not grieve because of me: that light of my eyes, which sometimes is not there because of my sins, has begun to show the beauty of its rays. By grace has my Lord has altered the manner of my distress while not considering the level of my deeds? God forbid! And He has not dealt with me in this way and nor will He do so. But constantly He has mixed his sweetness with my bitterness. Because we may not receive from Him and rejoice greatly without drinking from this bitterness and grieving, and without suffering and without seeking continual rest.
2. Only he is wise who knows the wishes of his Lord. But let the solitary embrace single-mindedly what is his own, even if at certain times he is dispersed by occasional happenings.[1] We are, my brothers, in a world of contingencies. Let us guard our eyes, our ears, our belly, our desiring, and our anger, because these things deprive us of the holy light. Especially, let us muzzle our tongue, the raving dog: it changes the living into fetid corpses.
3. Do not seek questions and answers among a large group, even if these seem to be profitable, because either they chill our fervor or others are pricked with envy. Rather let us hold our tongue in silence and let our heart be moved by our craft—one more pleasing to the Father[2] than that which is accomplished in accordance with the law on the mountain or again in Jerusalem.[3] We are not able to do this except in the calm harbor of silence which gladdens those who attain it.

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[1] Solitary (*îhîdâyâ*): "When someone attains these things by the grace of Christ he acquires unity with himself and with the One who restores him (var. unites him), the bodily functions being united with the impulses of the soul, and the things of the soul with the mind; while the mind is expanded incomprehensibly in unity with the knowledge of God and it sees the Glory of the Lord face to face, and shines in like manner, and is transformed into it." See Discourse 9, "On guarding the senses," Vat. 124, 320b–324a. See also Letter 4.7.

[2] cf. Jn. 4:23.

[3] cf. Jn. 4:21.

ܕܡܫܪܝ ܘܐܬܪܬܐ.

1. ܠܐ ܬܐܚܘܫ ܡܛܠܒܝܢ. ܢܗܘܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܢ ܗܘ ܕܒܪܝܐ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ
ܒܗܘܢ ܡܛܠܗܠܐ ܚܛܗ̈ܝ. ܚܙܝ ܡܢܘܐ ܦܐܘܠܐ ܐܫ̈ܡܘܗܝ.
ܘܡܟܝܠ ܕܒܥܠܐ ܦܣܠܦ ܡܢܝ ܒܥܠܡܘ. ܡܢ ܠܐ ܢܐܪ ܠܡܫܘܐܠ
ܕܚܛ̈ܝܢ ܚܫܐ. ܘܠܐ ܦܩܕ ܠܗܘܢ ܗܟܢܐ ܘܐܦܠܐ ܒܡܥܒܪ. ܐܠܐ
ܒܐܡܢܘ ܢܠܥܒ ܚܠܘܐܗ ܒܡܢ̈ܝܢ. ܡܛܠܗܠܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܠܡ
ܕܒܫܒ ܡܢܘ ܘܕܙܘܐ. ܠܚܠܡ ܕܒܥܠܐ ܡܢ ܗܟܠܡ ܘܒܫܐ. ܘܕܠܐ
ܒܐܠܗܐ ܢܣܠܐ ܐܡܢܠܐ܀

2. ܕܢܟܡܥܠܐ ܗܝ ܟܠܡܘܕ ܕܢܒܐ ܕܟܢ̈ܝܢ ܡܢܗܘ. ܒܢܡ ܡܣܒܠܐ
ܡܣܒܐܬܐ ܢܦܘܩ ܒܒܠܗܘ. ܐܦ ܐܟܝܠ ܕܡܥܠܬܐ ܢܠܦܠܗܘܕ ܡܢ
ܒܒ̈ܢܠܐ ܐܬܐ ܐܡܠܝ. ܒܟܠܡܥܠܐ ܕܒܒ̈ܢܠܐ ܐܬܠܝ ܐܬܝܢ. ܢܕܝܗܘܢ
ܒܟ̈ܢܝܢ ܘܒܐܬܪ̈ܝܢ ܘܒܡܢ̈ܥܝܢ ܘܒܢ̈ܒܠܝ ܘܒܣܥܠܝ. ܡܛܠܗܠܐ
ܕܗܘܝܢ ܒܟ̈ܠܝ ܠܢ ܡܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܡܒܥܠܐ. ܘܠܐܢ ܕܟܠܗܘܡ ܠܠܟܡܢ
ܟܠܟܠܐ ܦܡܢܐ܆ ܗܘܠܐ ܡܗܘܦܝ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܠܦ̈ܠܟܒܐ ܥܢ̈ܝܬܐ܀

3. ܥܐܬܠܐ ܘܦܘܢܝ ܦܠܒ̈ܥܠܐ ܒܢܠ ܥܒ̈ܢܬܐ ܠܐ ܐܓܒܠܐ. ܐܦܠܐ ܗܘܟܠܡ
ܕܥܟܢܢܝ ܡܘܐܬ̈ܪܠܐ. ܡܛܠܗܠܐ ܕܐܘ ܠܢ ܡܥܢܥܝ ܡܢ ܬܐܝܚ܆ ܐܘ
ܐܝܬ̈ܢܐ ܒܣܥܡܠܐ ܡܠܕܒܢܝ. ܐܠܐ ܢܐܝܕܘܕ ܠܟܡܝ ܒܓܠܐܠ܆ ܘܠܟܢ
ܢܠܐܝܕ ܒܐܘܡܣܘܠܐ ܙܝܒܥܠܐ ܚܠܠ ܐܚܐ܆ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܒܛܗܘܪܐ
ܘܐܘܒ ܒܐܘܪܝܥܠܡ ܢܡܘܥܐܬܐ ܡܥܠܐܡܟܝܠܐ. ܒܚܠܐ ܠܢ
ܕܢܥܦܡ ܠܗܘܕܐ܆ ܐܠܐ ܒܠܓܐܝܗ ܢܝܠܐ ܕܓܠܐܡܠܐ ܡܢܒܐ
ܠܡܢܝ̈ܗܝ܀

LETTER 23

1. After my coming from being with you, the Prince brought all his wicked retinue against me with those who obey him as his viceroys. And if the mercy of Him who desires life for all[1] had not been poured forth over my wretchedness, my soul would have stood at the gate of destruction at that very moment. But when the stumbling-blocks of these two disorderly kinds of spirits prevailed,[2] the light of your prayer shone on me in my sad shape. And by means of the words on your tongue, the Paraclete spoke to me; you drew me and brought me into that place preserved from alien feet.
2. Understand how our mysterious meeting came to pass. Behold from that moment, what things beyond speech and beyond telling shone on my unworthy self, such that the intellect carefully lays hold of the soul, lest from joy and love of these things she abandon her harp[3] to flee towards them!

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[1] 2 Peter 3:9.

[2] Beulay suggests that here spirits are intended, that is, demons and also persons who are the deputies of the devil.

[3] Evag., Cent. 4:62, the body as instrument of the soul.

ܟܗ

ܕܒܫ̈ܢܝܢ ܘܠܟܠܬ.

1. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܡܬܬܠܐܬ ܕܡܢ ܒܥܠܡ. ܐܪܝܟ ܒܒܒ ܐܪܒܘܬܐ
ܫܒܥܬܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܒܥܠܐ. ܒܗܝ ܡܫܬܥܒܕܢܐ ܠܐܪܥܐ ܕܝܠܗ.
ܘܟܠܗ ܢܝܫܗ ܕܪܟܐ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܟܠܐ܆ ܠܐ ܐܫܬܟ̇ܚ ܟܠܐ ܕܩܘܡܬ܆
ܢܦܫ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܪܘ ܒܬܪܝܢ ܛܘܪܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܗܘܬ. ܘܟܕ
ܕܐܦܘ ܡܚܫܘܒܬܐ ܡܢ ܐܪܬܘܬܘܢ ܗܘܟܢ ܬܘܪܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒܐ܆
ܕܡܫ ܒܒܒ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܪܒܥܝܢ܆ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܟܒܝܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܗܘܢܐ
ܒܗ. ܘܟܕ ܡܫܬܒܠܐ ܕܒܥܠܡܝܢ ܦܐܪܡܒܝܬܐ ܒܝ ܦܬܓܡܐ܆
ܢܘܪܐ ܐܒܒܥܠܐ ܠܬܪܐ ܢܫܟܝܢ ܡܢ ܬܩܠܐ ܢܘܟܪ̈ܝܬܐ܀
2. ܐܫܬܐܟܠ ܐܟܝܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܦܝܟܢ ܙܐܝܠܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܫܒܬܐ ܗܘܝ܆
ܐܟܢ ܕܟܠܐ ܠܐ ܫܘܘܬ ܠܐܢ ܕܢܦܫ܆ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܘܕܠܐ
ܠܘܢܝ. ܐܟܝܠܐ ܕܐܦ ܒܐܘܪܘܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܒܠܗ ܗܘܘܐ ܒܟܫܠܐ܆ ܕܠܐ
ܡܢ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܘܪܚܡܬܐ ܕܗܘܟܢ܆ ܠܡܒܘܫ ܒܒܪܢܗ ܘܒܥܠܘܗܝ
ܠܒܪܘܫ܀

Letter 24

1. My brother, keep your intellect motionless and marvel at God's love for us! While He performed all of his Economy such as the coming of his Son and his death for the redemption of our lives, and He laid down commandments for us by which we should adorn ourselves with good deeds and live: He did these things to help us and to honor us. What is in this for Him? Though you have seen the profusion of the mercies of the Good One, and more adorable than all, our God, He considers it as a favor done to Him that when we have accomplished these things which give us life, and bring us close to commingling with Him, we are brought near to Life.
2. Oh, how marvelous is your mercy, O our God, and the one who has felt it is inflamed and his heart burns continually to fly from this world abounding in misery. Alas! Alas to you, world of so many accidents! Blessed is the one who hates you, although he is not hated. Your enemies are the friends of the Beloved and your friends are loathed by his servants.[1] O my Father and my Nurturer, cut the course of my life from the world because desire mixed with the confidence to come to You will prepare this. Also for this You have placed me here, that I might gain this from the world. May your love, my Lord, cause me to be loosened from the world without resistance, and may pains and disease not constrain me to go out from it involuntarily. Because the one whose intellect is set free from it, the angels compel to remain in the world until his time comes. And the one who is ensnared by it, they lead from the world in torment and afflictions. How pleasant is the departure of your friends to You, O Good One! But how hard is the setting out from the world for all its own, because your friends depart towards their inheritance and these are deprived of what is theirs.

[1] Servants (*mšâmšanê*).

ܕܥܣܪܝܢ ܘܐܪܒܥܐ.

1. ܐܡܝܪ ܐܝܟ ܗܘܝܢ ܥܠܐ ܐܪܥܐ܆ ܘܐܬܐܪ ܒܫܘܒܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܕܟܠܝ.
ܕܡܢ ܒܟܠܗ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܗ ܘܡܬܠܬܐ ܕܒܪܗ ܘܡܫܘܬܗ ܠܫܘܪܝ ܚܝܝܢ
ܫܒܪ܆ ܘܫܡܥ ܒܗ ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܢܬܒܥܠ ܒܡܫܬܪܬܐ ܘܒܐܝܠܐ܆
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2. ܐܘ ܡܐ ܐܝܬ ܚܝܠ ܐܠܗܐ. ܘܡܢ ܕܐܪܓܫ ܒܗ܆ ܡܫܬܒܗܪ ܘܩܥܐ
ܠܟܠܗ ܒܟܠܟܝܢ܆ ܠܡܫܡܥ ܡܢܗ ܕܒܠܚܘܕ ܦܫܝܛ ܠܗܘܢ. ܘܐ
ܘܐ ܡܢܐ ܦܫܝܛ ܠܝܘܠܦܢܐ܆ ܐܬܟܢܫܘ ܠܟܠ ܕܫܡܝܐ. ܘܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܐ.
ܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܢܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܢܫܡܥ. ܘܢܫܡܥ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܬܗܘܢ.
ܐܘ ܐܚܝ ܘܡܪܚܡܢ. ܦܫܝܛ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܚܝܝ ܡܢܗ. ܒܢ ܐܪܥܐ
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ܒܠܫܢܐ ܘܒܐܬܟܪܝܐ ܕܚܝܝܢ ܡܐ ܦܪܝܫ ܫܘܢ ܕܢܦܩܝܢ ܠܟܠܗ
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ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘܢ ܠܒܪܬܗܘܢ ܡܦܫܝܢ܆ ܗܘܟܝܢ ܡܢ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ
ܡܬܟܢܝܢ܀

LETTER 25

[On the incomprehensibility[1] of God]

1. You asked me, my brother, how God is wholly in every place while not being limited by the place. According to what has been given to me by the grace of Christ my Fashioner,[2] with the help of your prayer, listen while I show you a little example about the true inwardness of the mystical meaning of the almighty Power, as much as the infirmity of my mind is able, being unworthy of such things.
2. Consider, my brother, while watching intelligently, how all the natures of the universe are filled with fire, and how this is hidden in them without visible activity, while it is in every place and appears totally everywhere though not being limited. The fire is hidden in a little pebble where it is invisible; also with it are the powers united to its nature. But if someone wants to make it go out, it may show itself a little and go out, while remaining in the pebble without being diminished. But if you give it scope, it will burn many dense forests, mountains, deserts, and everything which is suitable for burning. Then the power of all its nature will be made manifest and how it is hidden in a small and imperfect body with the flashes of its radiance and its warmth. It is not found in a limited way here, but completely with its power, in the strength of its totality, without limitation of this totality. Indeed its totality is not diminished but shows itself in the gathering of all the intensity of its activity, hidden here in worthless and imperfect bodies. From these it is seen by us to be totally in every place, while not being limited by any place.

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[1] Incomprehensibility (*lâ métdarkânûtâ*): perhaps of all the East Syrian writers John is closest to this concept of Pseudo-Dionysius which comes to him also through Gregory of Nyssa: "For leaving behind everything that is observed, not only what sense comprehends but also what the intelligence thinks it sees, it keeps on penetrating deeper until by the intelligence's yearning for understanding, it gains access to the invisible and the incomprehensible, and there it sees God." See *Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Moses*, tr. A. J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson (CWS 163, 1978), 95. See also Evag., Cent. 2:11.

[2] Christ the Fashioner, from the root *gebal*. On Christ as creator in Ephrem, see the note to Letter 5 and the work of Shemunkasho.

ܕܢܒܗܬ ܘܢܫܬܩ ܥܠ ܠܐ ܡܬܕܪܟܢܘܬܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ.

1. ܕܦܠܛܘܢ ܐܡܪ: ܕܐܝܟܢܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܐܠܗܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܒܒܪܝܬܐ: ܡܢ ܒܪܘܟ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ. ܐܡܬܝ ܕܐܫܟܚ ܠܗ ܠܡܚܘܝܘܬܗ ܘܡܫܡܥܐ ܠܟܘܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܘܢܝ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ: ܡܫܟܚ. ܡܢ ܠܐܝܬܘܬܐ ܕܒܪܬܐ ܐܢܘܢ: ܥܠ ܟܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܪܐܙܘܗܝ ܢܣܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܟܠ. ܐܡܬܝ ܕܦܫܛܐ ܡܣܝܒܠܢܐ ܡܕܒܪ ܠܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܠܡܐܡܪ ܗܘܠܝܢ܀

2. ܐܦܠܐ ܐܚܪ ܡܢ ܢܘܪ ܐܝܬ ܦܘܠܘܛܝܢܘܣ: ܕܐܝܟܢܐ ܡܟܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܢܝ̈ܢܫܐ ܕܗܢܐ ܥܠ ܡܢ ܗܘܐ: ܘܒܫܡܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܟܠ ܡܟܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܚܙܝܐ. ܡܢ ܒܟܠܒܘܢ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ. ܘܒܟܠܒܘܢ ܡܬܢܗܪܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܐ. ܒܫܡܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܒܪܝܐ ܕܒܘܪܐ. ܘܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ. ܘܟܡܢܐ ܐܦ ܚܝܠܐ ܡܚܝܕܝܢ ܒܚܝܠܗ. ܡܢ ܨܒܝܢ ܢܒܥܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܢܫܡܥܗ ܡܢܗ: ܕܒܪܐܝܬ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ. ܘܢܫܡܐ ܡܢ ܡܦܩܐ ܒܗ ܥܠܐ ܢܫܒܚܘܗ. ܘܠܐ ܐܬܐܠܐ ܠܗ ܡܟܒܪܬܐ: ܦܘܩܕܐ ܒܟܠܐ ܫܒܝܚܬܐ ܘܬܘܕܝܬܐ ܘܟܠ ܕܢܫܚ ܠܫܡܝܐ. ܘܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܢܣܠܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܒܫܗ: ܒܒܫܝܢܘܬܗ ܕܨܒܝܢܫܡܐ ܕܒܪܝܐ ܘܒܝܢܝܐ ܠܒܢ ܪܘܚܢܝܐ ܕܝܕܥܝܢ ܘܢܦܫܢܘܬܗ. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܬܦܫܩܢܘܬܐ. ܐܠܐ ܫܒܝܚܐ ܗܘܟܐ ܟܠܗ ܘܢܚܠܗ ܒܚܟܠܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܫܒܗ: ܡܢ ܠܐ ܫܒܝܚ ܫܒܗ. ܠܐ ܨܒܝܢ ܒܪܝܢ ܫܒܗ. ܟܠܗ ܡܦܫܩܢܘܬܐ ܡܣܬܝܐ ܠܡܒܥܘܬܐ ܡܟܒܪܢܘܬܗ. ܗܘܟܐ ܕܨܒܝܢܫܡܐ ܫܪ̈ܝܪܬܐ ܘܒܪ̈ܝܬܐ ܒܫܡܐ ܘܡܢܗܘܢ ܒܝ ܐܬܚܙܝܬ ܕܟܠܗ ܒܒܪܝܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܒܪܘܟ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܐ܀

3. See, my brother, how through a little pebble you may teach yourself concerning that glorious Nature which is completely hidden in every place while not contained by any place. Consider, my brother, this simile intellectually with a gaze which goes beyond all and enters within all: a look which takes away all which is in front of it and is in the middle of the light. Concerning the glorious and most blessed Nature which has created all and dwells in all without limits, being completely in every place while all the worlds together do not limit it, listen to what the Word says about this ineffable Nature: "He dwells in his saints."[3] And in each of them He dwells totally with reflections of light from his bosom, his ineffable powers; there He activates and shows forth all his power without being limited. Oh, what should I say here! Astonishment has interrupted my mind in its course; my hand has grown weak and the pen has fallen from it: He keeps me back from what my will prepared while indicating to me that silence is fitting here.
4. Incline your grace to me, O Good One, that I may speak about your Greatness as much as You permit it, even if it not correspond to your gift of mental vision. For, behold, the wonder and the marvel at the moment of amazement do not allow going out into the world of shadow. Glory to You, who while You are wholly in every place, You contain all and are not contained by anything! You dwell by your grace in the rational being, your friend, and You manifest in him all your glory, all your power and all your understanding. But neither your Nature, nor your glory, nor your understanding, nor your almighty power that gives life to all, are bound by anything or in anything while the beauty of your glory confirms in amazement the worlds of your Holiness, and in drunkenness it silences their stirrings and unites them with itself.

[3] cf. Jn. 14:23.

3. ܚܙܝ ܐܚܝ ܕܡܢ ܒܪܡܐ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܢܒܥ ܐܢܬ ܒܟܠ ܗܘ ܒܝܬܐ
ܡܒܣܡܐ. ܕܥܡܠܐ ܟܠܗ ܒܥܒܕܘܗܝ ܗܝ ܒܝܘܡ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܠܡ.
ܒܗܘܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܐܬܟܡܐ ܐܚܝ ܗܘܝܬ ܒܢܘܪܐ ܕܟܠܗܠ ܡܢ
ܟܠ. ܕܡܢ ܟܠ ܡܢܗܘܢ. ܗܘ ܕܫܡܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܢ ܩܕܡܘܗܝ.
ܘܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܬܦܪܫ. ܒܟܠ ܒܝܬܐ ܡܒܣܡܐ ܘܛܘܒܬܐ ܒܟܠ
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ܒܩܕܫܘܗܝ. ܘܒܥܒܕܝܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܟܠܗ ܒܒܠܗ܆ ܒܗܢ ܙܡܢܐ
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ܡܒܝܕܐ܀

5. As it is up to Him now to give you a sign in secret so as to understand, He has not granted me who am completely impure to go any further, keeping me from the presumption of doing my will. But even from these things you may learn those which are not to be spoken.

5. ܐܒܡܠܐ ܕܢܗܘܒ ܠܟܝ ܪܡܙܐ ܟܣܝܐ ܠܡܦܪܫܘܗ ܗܪܟܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܗܘ.
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ܐܦܫܝ ܡܢ ܕܠܡܦܪܫܘ ܗܘ ܕܪܒܐ ܗܘܝܠ. ܐܠܐ ܐܦ ܡܢ
ܗܟܝܠ ܐܬܠ ܠܟܝ ܕܐܬܟܠ ܐܠܟܝ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܬܡܠܟܝ܀

LETTER 26

1. That you asked me to instruct you about what is yours makes me very ashamed, even if it is said: "*The shameful are not at all ashamed.*"[1] But then these things which you desire will be revealed and before very long. If a place is cleared, the trees suck in much rain but the fruit comes in its own time. The farmer is always eager for the grain to ripen but the gathering of the harvest is at a fixed time. A father wishes complete growth for his sons in a day, if it were possible. But the order of nature is not disturbed by earnest desire.
2. So then, let summer precede you and you will eat heavenly fruits; let winter go by and you will see the Tree of Life blossom in the midst of your Paradise,[2] and when you eat from it you will never die.[3] For many times I see it begin to bud and it is beaten with hail while I hear the moving of unnatural[4] breezes.
3. Certainly, if we seek God, He reveals Himself to us. But take heed of this: if He reveals Himself, then He is within and is concealed. Uncover the veil that He may be shown. Lift the curtain that He may appear. He seeks a place where He may manifest his beauty: how great is his desire to be seen! By our earnest desire the place is cleared; the joys of summer come to us by waiting. In short, all things come in their own time, little by little, according to nature's growth. So also it is for the sons of God themselves. To Him be glory and may He make us partakers in the heritage of his Beloved.[5] Amen.

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[1] Jer. 6:15; 8:12.

[2] cf. Gen. 2:8; for tree of life within the soul, see also Letters 39.3; 51.2.

[3] cf. Jn. 6:50.

[4] Unnatural here refers to what is outside of nature, i.e., the passions. They are exterior to the nature of the soul as it has been created. What is above its nature is the contemplation of the Trinity. Isaac discusses these aspects of the life of the soul at length in Discourse 3, see my *St. Isaac of Nineveh, On the Ascetical Life* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989). See É. Khalifé-Hachem, "La prière pure." Abba Isaiah also speaks of what is natural and unnatural concerning the soul, see Chryssavgis, *Abba Isaiah*, Discourse 2.

[5] cf. Rom. 8:17.

ܕܒܗ̈ܝ ܘܩܬ.

1. ܕܫܠܛܬ ܡܢܢ ܕܐܘܪܚܝ ܟܠܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܕܝܘܡܢ: ܒܗܘܢ ܛܒ ܟܗܘܐ
ܐܢܐ. ܐܦ ܐܡܝܪܐ ܕܒܩ̈ܘܫܬܐ ܠܐ ܟܗܘܢܝ. ܒܪܡ ܕܝܢ ܗܘܟܝܢ ܕܪ̈ܥܝ ܐܢܬ.
ܐܢܬ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܐܬܪ̈ܟܝܢ: ܘܟܠܗ ܟܠܟܠܐ ܡܬܒܢܝܐ. ܠ ܐܬܪܐ ܢܬܦܠܐ:
ܗܘܝ ܡܬܪܐ ܦܬܚ ܐܫܬ̈ܢܝ: ܐܠܐ ܦܪܟܐ ܟܠܟܘܗ ܗܘܐ. ܘܐܒܪܐ
ܠܐܡܝܢܗ ܡܦܘܝ ܠܗܘܡܟܢ ܙܒܢܘ. ܒܪܡ ܒܘܢܗ ܟܠܟܠܬܐ
ܢܝܠ ܗܘ ܐܒܢܘ. ܘܐܟܠ ܠܒܢ̈ܝܘܗܝ ܒܗܘܡܐ ܟܠܐ ܦܘܡܬܐ
ܡܦܡܫܢܬܐ ܠ ܡܬܒܝܢܐ ܗܘܬ. ܐܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܟܬܟܬܐ ܛܒܥܐ ܒܢܝܐ
ܒܗܘܘܢܐ܀

2. ܡܕܡ ܦܘܡ ܟܢ ܡܢܛܐ ܘܐܬܐܦܠܠ ܦܐܪܐ ܥܡܢ̈ܝܐ. ܟܒܪ ܥܘܟܡܐ
ܗܠܘܡܐ: ܘܐܒܪܐ ܠܐܡܝܢ ܢܝܐ ܕܡܘܟܒ ܒܡܕܟܬ ܦܪܕܥܡ. ܕܟܢ
ܡܢܘ ܐܬܦܠܠ: ܟܟܟܡ ܠܐ ܡܐܠܐ ܐܝܬ. ܡܢܛܠ ܕܐܒܢ̈ܬܐ ܥܡܢ̈ܝܬܐ
ܢܕܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܦܪܝ ܦܡܢ. ܘܢܟܠܗ ܟܗ ܒܪܕܐ. ܡܦܟܠ ܠܐ ܡܒ̈ܢܝܐ
ܦܡܟܟ ܐܢܐ ܕܡܬܐܬܝܟܡ܀

3. ܠ ܢܒܥܘܢ ܟܡ ܠܐܟܗܘܐ ܡܬܥܠܐ ܠܢ. ܢܕܝ ܗܘ ܕܡܬܥܠܐ.
ܡܕܡ ܡܢ ܟܥܘ ܐܬܠܘܢ ܘܡܢܘܦ. ܥܟܝ ܐܢܒܝܬܐ ܕܐܬܢܘܐ.
ܐܘܕܡ ܘܒܠܐ ܕܐܬܒܪܐ. ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܟܒܐ ܕܢܒܢܝ ܟܗ ܕܢܘܐ ܥܘܦܪܘ.
ܗܘܝ ܡܦܘܝ ܕܐܬܒܪܐ. ܒܗܘܘܢܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܡܦܠܬܦܐ. ܒܗܘܘܟܢܐ
ܡܢܛܐ ܕܢܬܪܘܬܐ ܐܬ̈ܐ ܟܡ. ܘܗܟܠܐ: ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܟܪܟܗܘܢ ܐܬ̈ܬ.
ܒܡܟܠܠܐ ܡܟܠܠܐ ܐܡܪ ܬܐܘܟܬ ܒܢܝܐ: ܐܦ ܒܬ̈ܝ ܠܠܗܘܐ. ܕܟܗ
ܥܘܟܢܐ ܘܡܢ ܢܥܘܐܦ ܒܪܬܐܬܐ ܢܟܢܟܗ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 27

1. I know the Father in his Christ, but the Son I perceive through the Spirit. For outside of Him I have neither stability, nor movement, nor life, nor sensation. And when I am consumed by wonder, I see Them as one lamp and by its reflection I am illumined.[1] Therefore I marvel at myself and rejoice spiritually that the Source of Life be found in me. This is the summing up of the incorporeal world.
2. The wise man is not able to give an explanation of this. Glory to Him who makes wise his own by what is his own and reveals his beauty to the delight of those who love Him!

[1] See Macarius 15.38. See also Letter 39.6.

ܢܒ

ܕܥܣ̈ܪܝܢ ܘܚܡܫܐ.

1. ܐܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܠܐܒܐ ܒܡܫܝܚܗ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܠܒܪܐ ܕܝܢ ܒܝܕ ܪܘܚܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܐܦܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܐܡܬ ܠܒ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܗ ܦܘܡܐ ܘܪܘܒܐ ܘܣܓܝܐܐ ܘܦܓܪܢܝܬܐ. ܘܟܕ ܡܬܒܥܠܘ ܐܢܐ ܒܬܘܪܐ܆ ܠܡܘܠܟܢ ܚܕ ܠܡܦܠܓܘ ܢܕܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܒܕܡܘܬܗ ܡܕܚܡܝ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܬܒܥܠ ܐܢܐ ܒܗ ܐ̇ܘܪ ܐܢܐ ܘܙܘܪ ܐܢܐ ܪܘܚܢܝܬ. ܕܟܕ ܡܬܝܕܥ ܠܗ ܝܬܝܪ ܕܢܝܐ. ܗ̇ܘ ܗܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܓܫܝܡܬܐ܀
2. ܦܘܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܝܕܥ ܢܦܫܐ ܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܝܕܥ. ܡܘܟܟܐ ܠܗܘ ܕܡܢܝܢ ܠܒܝܬܗ ܒܝܬܗ. ܘܓܠܐ ܡܘܦܪܗ ܠܡܕܘܢܐ ܕ̈ܢܦܫܬܗܘܢ܀

LETTER 28

1. What have I to write to you, O my most beloved, O servant, O laborer? What is mine cannot be written down lest he be visible to the pure only in the mirror of words.[1] May He give Himself in a vision in your heart,[2] now and forever, and may you become crazed with love for Him and may you be inflamed by his beauty.
2. Now then, O you who are weary and vexed by the service of your Lord, place your head on the knees of your Lord and refresh yourself. Fling yourself on his breast[3] and inhale the Spirit of Life so that Life be mingled with your substance. Lean on Him for He is your Table and be nourished at it by His Father.[4] Purify your mirror and without hesitation the unique Light will be made manifest to you in a triune way. Take this to heart and you will perceive that your God lives.[5]

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[1] Matt. 5:8.
[2] The vision of God, his Glory, is seen in the mirror of the soul.
[3] cf. Jn. 13:23.
[4] cf. Evag., Cent. II: 60.
[5] cf. 1 Kings 17:1; 18:10.

ܕܒܥ̈ܬܐ ܘܐܦ̈ܝܐ.

1. ܡܢܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܟ ܕܐ̇ܟܠܘܒ ܠܟܝ܆ ܐܘ̄ ܢܥܒܕ ܠܟ ܡܢ ܒܠܠ܆
ܓܒܪܐ ܦܩܚܐ. ܗܢܐ ܕܠܒ ܠܐ ܡܬܒܥܐ. ܕܒܡܣܪܐܝܬ ܩ̈ܠܐ ܠܒܕ̈ܒܬܐ
ܒܠܚܘܕ ܡܬܒܕܐ. ܢܛܠܠ ܗ̇ܘ ܠܗ ܒܠܒܟ ܠܚܕܐܐ ܗܘܝܐ
ܘܡܬܒܠܒܠܡܢ܆ ܘܐܝܬܝܐ ܒܪܚܡܘܬܗ ܘܐܝܦܠܘܬܗ ܒܡܘܦܪܗ܀

2. ܘܗܘܕܐ ܡܥܡܠܠ ܐܘ̄ ܕܠܐܐ ܘܡܛܪܦ ܒܬܡܡܬܐ ܕܡܪܗ܆ ܩܕܡ
ܕܒܩܝ ܠܠܠ ܒܘܪ̈ܒ ܡܢܝ ܘܐܬܐܬܒܚ. ܐܝܟ ܠܠܠ ܚܕܝܗ
ܘܩܒܘܩ ܪ̈ܘܚ ܚ̈ܝܐ. ܕܢܐܝܠܛܗܘܢ ܒܡܢܬܒܬܝ.
ܐܩܠܡܝ ܠܠܘܗܝ ܕܗ̇ܘܝܘ ܦܠܘܪܝ܆ ܘܡܢܗ ܠܐܠܘܗܝ
ܐܐܬܐ̈ܪܬܐ. ܕܒܐ ܡܚܪܐܝܬ ܘܕܐ ܦܘܠܛܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܚܕܚܐ ܠܐܠܗܐܝܬ
ܠܝ ܒܗ̇ ܡܠܢܘܬܐ ܩܕܡ ܗܘܐ ܠܠܠ ܠܠܝ. ܘܐܪ̈ܥܐ ܕܢܚ
ܗܘ ܠܐܠܗܝ܀

LETTER 29

1. You are, O man, an image of God.[1] Do you wish the image to take on the likeness of the Original?[2] Silence within you all activities whatsoever. Bear continually in your heart the yoke of Our Lord. Marvel at this greatness in your mind, until it become radiant with his glory and be transformed into the Archetype[3] and you become a god in God, having obtained the image of your Creator by the union which likens to Him.
2. As to the fire of your Lord, He Himself has suppressed its flame in you, so that He might teach you the harm of being scattered. When this notion is strong in you, then He will rekindle his flame in you, and your heart will become warm and your flesh will be inflamed with its heat. For the fire has not gone out but lies dormant as an occasion of correction.

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[1] cf. Gen. 1:26, 27; image of God (*salmâ*): on John's distinction between the image of God in which man is created and the divine resemblance (*dumyâ*, *demûtâ*) received at baptism, see Beulay, ES, 481–485. Man as image of God is central to the thinking of Narsai. See the many examples in *Homélies de Narsai sur la Création*, ed. and trans. P. Gignoux (PO 34, 1968), fasc. 3–4. See also F. G. McLeod, "Man as the image of God: its meaning and theological significance in Narsai," *TS* 42 (1981): 458–468. The distinction in this Letter between image and likeness may be due to Evagrian influence, see Gnostikos, 151 in J. Lemaitre, "Contemplation," *DSpir* 2 (1937): 1783. Gregory of Nyssa saw the image as already having the fullness of the resemblance; see J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (Paris: 1953), 48. Nor, according to Beulay, do Macarius or Pseudo-Dionysius make this distinction; see Beulay, ES, 483. On other references to this issue, see J. Kirchmeyer, "Grecque (Église)," *DSpir* 6 (1967): 813–22.

[2] cf. Col. 1:15, Christ the image of God, *demûtâ dalâhâ*.

[3] The transformation of man's resemblance into the divine resemblance is a transformation into Christ by means of grace, see Letter 2.6.

ܟܗ

ܕܡܫܪ̈ܝܢ ܘܠܩܘܒܠ.

1. ܙܟܘܬܐ ܐܝܟܢ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ ܐܘ̄ ܒܪܢܫܐ. ܙܟܐ ܐܝܬ ܕܢܣܒ ܙܟܘܬܐ ܘܗܘܝܐ ܕܐܦܝܐ: ܦܠܛ ܡܢ ܟܠܗܝܢ ܡܣܟܪ̈ܢܘܬܗ ܕܟܠܗܝܢ: ܘܬܟܝܢ ܚܕܪܘ ܕܡܪܢ ܟܠܟܝܢ ܘܐܘܬܪܐ ܕܪܒܘܬܗ ܒܡܘܗܒܬܐ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ. ܒܕܡܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܒܡܘܗܒܬܗ: ܘܢܛܠܩܘܢ ܟܠܗ ܒܕܡܘܬܐ: ܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ: ܒܚܕܝܘܬܐ ܡܫܡܗܘܬܐ ܒܗܘ܀

2. ܢܘܪܗ ܕܡܪܢ: ܘܒܗܘ ܦܠܛ ܡܢ ܚܘܫܒܢܐ. ܕܢܦܠܛܢ ܢܦܫܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢܐ. ܕܡܐ ܕܢܣܪ ܡܢ ܗܘܝܐ ܪܘܚܢܐ: ܗܘܝܢ ܕܫܠܡ ܡܢ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܘܚܝܐ ܠܟܠܢ. ܘܡܫܪܢ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܡܘܬܗ. ܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܡܘܕܝܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܡܫܡܫܐ ܕܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ܀

Letter 30

1. I read your letter and I am filled with intolerable suffering. All my body, with my soul, is joined to the momentary affliction.[1]
2. By the strength of my God, I did not suffer grievously. But I have faith that by means of the sprinkling which is from my heaven, I may water my Lord's field, and the desirable and splendid seed of life will appear in it.[2] I will always make of the sprinkling an inundation in which the enemies will be drowned.
3. Therefore the Lord lives, for you will never again pass a whole day without God. He hears those who are broken-hearted,[3] so then for me laments will increase, but for you a variety of consolations in the beloved Child who is formed in a Pauline way.[4]

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[1] 2 Cor. 4:17.

[2] This would seem to refer to the water of tears distilled from his heart by his suffering.

[3] Ps. 34:18.

[4] Gal. 4:19; here John speaks of spiritual birth in another, engendered by the sufferings of a solitary as a dimension of his universal love. See Beulay, ES, 375–77. Compare with Symeon the New Theologian and his ideas on spiritual birth. See S. P. Brock, "Mary and the Eucharist," *Sobornost/ECR* 1:2 (1979): 58–59.

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ܕܬܠܬܝܢ.

1. ܦܪܝܬ ܒܬܕܒܪܬܝ ܘܐܬܦܢܝܬ ܚܫܐ ܠܐ ܡܣܬܝܒܪܢܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܠܗ
ܦܓܪܝ ܟܠܗ ܥܡ ܢܦܫܝ ܡܦܪ̈ܓܢ ܒܚܫܐ ܕܐܒܝܠܐ ܡܟܝܠ܀

2. ܠܐ ܢܦܩܬ ܢܫܘܫܡܬ ܒܚܝܠ ܠܠܒܝ. ܘܡܗܘܡܢ ܐܢܐ ܕܟܝܢ
ܪ̈ܣܣܐ ܕܡܢ ܫܡܝܐ ܕܢܚܬ ܐܫܝܐ ܠܐܡܦܪܙܘ ܕܡܪܝ܆ ܘܠܐܝܕܝܐ ܒܢܦ
ܪܘܚ ܚܝܠܐ ܩ̈ܓܝܐ ܘܗܘܕܬ̈ܐ. ܘܒܐܡܒܝܘ ܐܟܢ ܡܚܘ ܡ̈ܠܠܐ܆
ܘܒܗܘܢ ܒܒܟ̈ܒܟܐ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܝ܀

3. ܘܡܟܝܠ ܢܚ ܗܘ ܡܪܝܐ. ܕܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܢܦܘܩ ܠܝ ܝܘܡܐ ܫܠܫܠܐ
ܫܦܝܡ ܡܢ ܠܠܗܘ. ܦܫܝ ܠܬܒ̈ܪܝ ܒܒܠܐ. ܠܢ ܡܟܝܠ
ܬܬܢܐܐ ܢܫܓܝܢ܆ ܘܠܝ ܒܩ̈ܡܠܐ ܡܩ̈ܫܟܠܐ܆ ܒܝܟܝܐ ܪ̈ܚܝܡܐ
ܕܡܬܠܪ̈ܝ ܦܘܠܘܫܬܐ܀

LETTER 31

1. O servant who labors, I never weary of stirring you up at all times with my inept words: "Love your Lord, I beg of you!" And so it will be until your soul is completely bathed in his delight and forgets itself and perceives itself to be a child of the Father.
2. For He said: *That they may be one in us.*[1] Glory to You, uniting those who love Him, that they may be one with Him in his Father. When I remember your love in those who love You and theirs in You, O Life of every world, the limbs of my body are disjointed by its force and the flow of my writing ceases. Truly, my Lord, through you I speak what is yours to those who are yours—and may I be considered as without reproach in this.
3. O servant, who has exchanged his servitude for the sonship of the Lord of the worlds, strengthen your soul a little since evening draws nigh for the end of your work. Fix your eyes within yourself a little that his gladdening radiance may shine out in you, and this especially at the time when you fall down on your face in prayer: there is no time like this for the vision of the One who sees all. Here He reveals Himself to those who love Him and He delights them.

[1] 1 Jn. 17:21.

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ܕܬܠܬܝܢ ܘܚܕܐ.

1. ܕܒܟܠܙܒܢ ܐܢܫܝܢ ܒܫܒܥܬܐ ܡܗܘܪܬܐ ܐܘܿ ܓܒܪܐ ܦܟܝܗܐ
ܠܐ ܬܐܬܐ ܠܟ. ܘܚܙܝ ܠܡܢܘ ܫܒܩܬ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܟ. ܘܗܘܝܬ ܠܒܝܫܬܐ
ܕܢܦܩ ܡܢܗ ܠܐܪܥܬܟ ܒܚܝܠܗ܇ ܘܬܗܘܐ ܢܦܫܗ܇ ܘܒܝܬܗ
ܗܘ ܠܟ ܕܒܝܬܗ ܕܐܬܐ܀

2. ܐܡܪ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ ܚܕ ܒܝ. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܟ ܡܢܚܝܬܐ ܕܪܚܡܘܗܝ܇
ܕܢܗܘܘܢ ܒܡܕܝܢ ܚܕ ܒܐܒܘܗܝ. ܒܝ ܐܢܫܝܢ ܒܪܢܫܘܬܟ
ܕܒܪܢܫܝܢ ܘܕܠܗܘܢ ܒܝ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܐܢܐ. ܐܘܿ ܚܢܢ ܕܟܠܗ ܒܠܒܝ܇
ܗܘܕܝܢ ܦܩܘܕܝܢ ܡܠܦܫܝܢ ܡܢ ܒܝܫܬܗ. ܘܡܪܕܘܬܗ ܚܘܒܐ
ܟܠܗܐ. ܐܝܟ ܒܝ ܡܪܝ ܠܕܠܟܝ ܕܠܟܝ ܡܦܠܠ ܐܢܐ. ܘܕܠܐ
ܒܕܠܟ ܠܟ ܠܐܬܝܒܬ܀

3. ܐܘܿ ܓܒܪܐ ܕܢܠܟ ܒܒܪܘܬܗ ܒܪܘܬܐ ܠܡܪܐ ܠܟܬܒܐ܇ ܚܘܪ
ܢܦܫܟ ܦܟܝܗܐ ܕܡܪܟ ܪܡܫܐ ܕܫܘܡܠܝ ܦܟܠܗܬܝ. ܐܪܘ ܐܢܬ
ܒܝ ܡܟܝܠܐ ܕܒܝܚ ܙܡܢܐ ܡܢܚܝܬܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܠܐܝܪ ܒܐܒܝܬܐ
ܕܬܦܠܐ ܒܠܐ ܐܦܝܟ. ܒܟܠ ܐܘܚܐ ܒܚܝܬܐ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܟܠܐ܇ ܐܝܟ ܗܘܐ.
ܗܪܟܐ ܡܠܟܬܐ ܠܒܪܢܫܘܬܟ ܘܡܟܫܦܝܢ܀

4. The one who looks with greed is not satisfied. The one who seeks his Lord outside of himself, gains no profit. But the soul who solemnly escorts the Son of his Lord[2] within itself, the excitement of its praise is silenced only by the wonder at his beauty. This is the soul who has drunk the mixture of his sweetness and is mingled with Him and He with it. This is the soul who always breathes the sweet fragrance of its Beloved. This is the soul who cries out shamelessly: *Who can separate me from You?*[3] To this soul He manifests his servants,[4] and they encourage it to chant with them their "Holy, Holy, Holy."[5]
5. But you say: "Be quiet, do not torment me with things such as these!" So I, as you have spoken, keep silent.

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[2] cf. Ps. 118.26; Matt. 21:9, 15; 23:39; Lk. 2:14.

[3] Rom. 8:35.

[4] Servants (*mšāmšanê*), ministering angels.

[5] In Letter 4.5 John has already spoken of the soul's fellowship with the angels and being mixed (from *hlṭ*) with them as kindred. The final stage of this relationship is no longer the soul's perception of angels (see Letter 19.6), but rather being united with them by resemblance to them, and thus they unite in a common "Sanctus" before the vision of God. Here there may be Evagrian influence, according to Beulay, in identifying the human intellect with that of the angelic one. See Beulay, ES*,* 363–368.

4. ܕܢܕܐ ܡܚܒܠܢܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܦܣܩܐ. ܘܕܚܠܐ ܠܡܪܗ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܗ ܠܐ
ܡܬܗܘܝܐ. ܢܦܫܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܕܝܚܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܗ: ܢܒܥܐ ܕܐܫܬܘܚܠܦܗ
ܒܬܗܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܦܪܗ ܡܫܬܠܛܐ ܒܟܝܢܗ. ܗܕܐ ܗܝ ܕܐܫܬܠܛܬ
ܡܪܓܠܐ ܕܝܠܘܬܗ ܘܐܬܦܪܣܬ ܗܝ ܒܗ ܘܗܝܗ ܒܗ. ܗܕܐ
ܗܝ ܕܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܦܫܬܐ ܠܗ ܠܟܝܢܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܗ ܒܫܡܝܐ. ܗܕܐ
ܗܝ ܕܩܒܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܗܬܬܐ. ܕܡܢܗ ܡܫܡܫ ܕܡܢܝ ܒܦܪܨܘܦ. ܠܗܕܐ
ܡܢܘܐ ܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܗ ܘܫܒܚܝ ܒܡܢܗ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ܀
5. ܐܠܐ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܬ ܕܫܒܘܚ ܠܟ. ܠܐ ܬܫܬܒܩ ܒܪܝܫ ܗܟܝܠ. ܘܐܦ
ܐܢܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܫܠܡܝ ܫܠܐ ܐܢܐ܀

LETTER 32

[On the temptations which seized him and on affliction of the soul]

1. I beseech you, help me in prayer. The demons have prepared a temptation for me, the account of which terrifies those who hear of it. Nor is it right to commit it to writing, lest the heart of those who hear of it be troubled, and these wretched ones be strengthened. Their loathsome forms are shown to me in the flesh and they wish, miserable as I am, to burn my eyes and consume them in their fire. And when I am indignant with them[1] in the strength of Our Lord, they are defeated, but again they boldly return, showing their cruelty towards me and threatening me. But when I make the sign of the cross[2] of our Life before them, they return to the darkness, their portion, their fire quenched. Remember what happened to the valiant Mar Anthony, yet that was more spiritual than this. The fiery ones were with him because of his diligence, but they are with me because of my weakness and cowardice and because of my innumerable sins.
2. Take heed that no man see or hear these things besides yourself and your friend. And do not grieve about them. Only pray to your Lord that He give me strength. Let us cast our anxiety on the Lord[3] and in Him we will persevere. I constantly give Him things more numerous, more overpowering, and more cruel to bear than these.

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[1] To be indignant with demons, to actually respond to them, comes out of the Evagrian tradition. Specifically in his *Antirrheticos*, but also in the *Pratikos*, Evagrius instructs to confront demons without fear and even with anger. See A. & C. Guillaumont, "Démon," *DSpir* 3 (1957): 189–212, esp. 196–205.

[2] Together with the antirrhetic method and the remembrance of God (*ʿuhdânâ dalâhâ*), the sign of the Cross is an important weapon against demons. See John's Discourse 3: "Sometimes when I am kissing the cross there shines from it upon my face a star of glorious and wondrous brightness, and my heart rejoices; and when I stretch out my hand and put it before me in the air or on my body I see it established in the likeness of an ineffable light. At the marvelous sight gladness is stirred up in my heart such as I have no strength in me to endure before it. … The devils stand in great distress every time this is done before them, as I have seen their anguish from it many times and have praised the Lord." See Discourse 3, "On the demon of fornication," Vat. 124, 286 a–b.

[3] cf. Ps. 55:22.

ܠܒ

ܕܛܠܝܡ ܘܫܪ̈ܝܪ܆ ܥܠ ܢܦܫ̈ܬܐ ܕܐܬܪ̈ܚܡܘܗܝ ܘܐܬܒܨܪܬ ܢܦܫܐ.

1. ܟܠ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܝܢ ܒܕܘܟܝܬ ܒܣܘܠܬܐ. ܢܦܫܘܬܐ ܟܠܗ̇ ܠܗ ܩܠܝܬܐ܆
ܕܡܫܟܚܐ ܡܫܦܪܐ ܠܡܫܡ̈ܥܬܐ. ܘܠܡܫܡܠܝܘ ܠܐ ܙܕܩ. ܕܠܐ ܢܬܠܐܬܝܢ
ܠܟܠ ܕܡܬܡ̈ܥܬܐ܆ ܘܦܘܩ ܦܬ̈ܓܡܐ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܠܡܕܒܪܐ
ܦܪܢܣܬܐ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܢܫܝܢ. ܘܡܫܒ̈ܚܢ ܕܒܗ ܡܬܦܢܐ ܙܒܢ
ܕܢܦܠܛܘܢ ܘܢܣܪܩܘܢ ܒܣܘܪܚܢܗܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܡܬܕܒܪ ܐܢܐ ܒܗܘܢ
ܒܚܝܠܐ ܡܢܝ ܡܫܬܠܚܝܢ. ܘܐܦ ܒܬܫܡܫܬܗܘܢ ܦܩܕܝܢ܆
ܘܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܢܫܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܡܫܡܫܘ܆ ܘܚܣܝܢ. ܘܟܕ ܢܦܫܐ
ܕܙܟܝܬܗ ܕܢܦܫ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܗܘܢ ܟܬܒ ܐܢܐ܆ ܠܡܫܡܫܐ ܦܬܓܡܗܘܢ
ܦܩܕܝܢ܆ ܘܠܣܘܪܚܢܗܘܢ ܕܟܠܐ. ܒܗܕ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܢ ܡܢܝ
ܐܬܚܘܝܬ. ܒܝܘܡ ܩܘܕܫ ܗܠܝܢ ܡܢ ܦܩܕ ܘܠܘܩܒܠ ܕܫܡܥܗ
ܡܛܠ ܒܦܩܕܗ. ܘܡܠܟ ܡܛܠ ܡܬܚܫܒܐ ܘܡܫܬܠܡܐ܆
ܘܡܛܠ ܢܛܘܪ ܕܠܐ ܫܦܝܪ܀

2. ܚܕ ܕܡܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܗܘܢ ܚܕܐ ܐܘ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܫܛܪ ܡܢܝܢ
ܘܚܒܝܒܝܢ. ܘܚܝܠܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܐܫܬܟܚ. ܒܚܘܒܐ ܙܕܩ
ܠܡܫܪܢ ܕܢܛܠ ܠܗ ܢܦܫܐ. ܥܠ ܡܪܝܐ ܕܫܒܩ ܙܟܝܬ ܘܒܗ
ܢܦܫܗ. ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܘܟܪܝܗܐ ܘܡܪ̈ܝܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܛܒܐܝܬ ܠܟܘ
ܡܢܝ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ܀

Letter 33

[On the subject of temptations[1]]

1. Since your going away from me, my wounds are so many that my soul continually expects to pass on, and why this is, I do not know. Because of my many sins, my trials have also multiplied and gone over my head, so that while I sleep or when I am awake, the Rebels gather dragons and scorpions and bring them upon me in endless numbers, besides innumerable hidden and manifest torments which they personally inflict on me. In the midst of these things, my guilty soul has no hope except the hidden Will of the Creator.[2] But herein is known the abundance of his ineffable grace.
2. My brother, ask Our Lord to give me the strength to endure the sufferings which my sins have prepared for me. And besides yourself, let no one else see these things lest the Guardian of my life be angered with me and remove himself from me; and I die cruelly at the hands of my enemies. Do not be overly grieved because the right hand of the Lord sustains, brings strength and consoles in the midst of these things.

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[1] For analysis of kinds of temptations (*nešyonê*), typical of East Syrian mystics, see Alfeyev, *Spiritual World of Isaac*, 91–100, with ample quotes from Isaac: "If the diver found a pearl in every oyster then everyone would quickly become rich! And if he brought one up the moment he dove, without waves beating against him, without any sharks encountering him, without having to hold his breath until he nearly expires, without being deprived of the clear air which is granted to everyone, and having to descend to the abyss—if all of this were the case, pearls would come more thick and fast than lightning flashes." And perceptively Isaac also describes how if one asks God to take away a temptation, he will, but the gift intended will be withheld as well.

[2] Hidden Will (*rémzâ kasyâ*) occurs in Isaac; see Brock, *Isaac of Nineveh*, ch. 9.6. The phrase is very common in Narsai; see Alwan, "Remzō," 91–106. See also P. Gignoux, "Les doctrines eschatologiques de Narsai," *OS* 11 (1966): 351–352; 461–488.

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ܕܐܠܗܝ ܘܐܠܟܠ: ܒܗ ܒܚܝܐ ܕܢܝܫܘܩܬܐ.

1. ܡܢ ܒܬܪܟܠܗܝ ܕܡܢ ܙܒܢ ܒܝ ܫܘܟܠܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ: ܢܦܫܝ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ ܕܡܫܦܚܢܐ ܠܡܘܣܐ. ܘܡܢܐ ܗܘ ܗܘܐ ܠܐ ܢܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܛܠ ܚܛܗܝ ܫܦܝܪܐ: ܫܦܝܪܗ ܐܦ ܢܦܫܝ ܘܒܒܪܗ ܠܪܚܡܝ. ܐܚܝܢܐ ܕܒܝ ܕܡܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܘܒܝ ܠܒܪ ܐܢܐ. ܗܘܝ ܡܚܫܡܝ ܘܦܫܛܝ ܠܟܠ ܡܬܘܪܐ: ܐܢܫܐ ܘܡܫܬܪܐ: ܕܠܡܢܝܢܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܫܡܐ. ܫܛܪ ܡܢ ܩܢܝܐ ܒܫܢܝܐ ܘܫܒܝܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܢܝܢ ܕܒܡܘܡܗܘܢ ܡܫܬܝܢ ܒܝ. ܘܡܠܦܫܝ ܡܢܝܚܘܬܐ ܒܡܕܒܪܬܐ ܗܠܝܢ: ܠܟܠ ܫܒܪܐ ܐܬܐ ܠܝ ܕܡܝܗ ܒܫܡܐ ܕܚܪܘܡܐ. ܗܪܟܐ ܡܠܝܟܐ ܡܫܝܟܘܬܐ ܠܝܟܘܬܗ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܦܟܠܐ܀

2. ܐܦܝܫ ܐܢܫ ܠܡܦܢܝ: ܕܒܛܠ ܠܟ ܢܝܠܐ ܠܡܫܦܫܒܪܗ ܒܐܟܠܐ ܕܛܒܘ ܠܟ ܚܛܗܝ. ܘܫܛܪ ܡܢܝ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܚܙܐ ܠܗܘܠܝܢ. ܕܠܐ ܢܬܢܫܟ ܠܟܠܟ ܢܛܘܪܐ ܕܚܝܒ: ܘܠܐܪܒܝܟ ܡܢܝ: ܘܐܡܘܬܐ ܡܢ ܐܬܪ ܩܢܝܐ ܒܝܬܐܟ ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܫܦܝܪ. ܡܛܠܠ ܕܡܢܝܢܗ ܕܡܪܢܐ ܦܡܟܐ ܘܚܒܝܐ ܢܝܠܐ. ܘܡܟܝܠܐ ܡܪܟܠ ܗܘܟܝ܀

LETTER 34

1. Whoever seeks to speak of the love of God proclaims his ignorance because he has not perceived that it is utterly impossible to do so. I marvel at the wisdom of our Creator, how He binds the soul to the body lest it fly from it at the time of these graces when it is immersed in the desire of Him; yet the soul forgets and leaves its body alive but without impulse or sensation for a long time, then it again returns and provides all that is necessary to the body to remain alive. And when I, wretched and feeble as I am, see how words and images are as far from showing the truth as one standing on the earth and looking on heaven is far from touching it, I ask that I not be bothered again with the worry of these things.
2. Yet I call blessed whoever receives the experience of the divine mysteries in himself. There are two things whose sweetness cannot be endured: these are love and joy. Love slays and mortifies the intellect's stirrings with amazement. And joy awakens and resuscitates its fiery movements. Regarding this sweetness, not even the spiritual beings can make known its greatness. Likewise the holy breath which is mingled with the spiritual beings, and with which they are united, who can speak of it? Its fragrance, its peacefulness and the delight from it are unspeakable, even in the tongue of angels. The body and the soul together enjoy all of this, although only the intellect is the host of its perception: *Whether in the body or not, I do not know*, says the experienced one.[1]

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[1] 2 Cor. 12:2–3.

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ܕܬܠܬܝܢ ܘܐܪܒܥܐ.

1. ܒܟܠ ܙܒܢܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܡܢ ܕܪܒܐ ܕܐܡܪ: ܠܐ ܢܕܒܠܘܗܝ ܡܒܝܢ. ܟܕ
ܠܐ ܐܪܓܫ ܟܠܐ ܡܬܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܠܓܡܪ. ܐܘܪ ܐܢܐ ܒܫܡܫܬܗ
ܕܟܪܘܡ: ܐܝܟ ܟܕ ܐܡܪ ܠܒܫܡܐ ܒܫܦܝܪܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܐܦܪܘܫ:
ܒܕܒܢܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܡܩܘܒܠܐ. ܕܟܕ ܒܪܓܠܬܗ ܡܬܟܬܒܐ: ܛܒܢܐ
ܘܡܒܝܢܐ ܠܗ ܠܫܦܝܪܘ ܒܢܝܘܬܐ ܠܒܢܘܗܝ ܕܠܐ ܢܟܘܐ ܘܪܓܫܬܐ
ܛܘܪܐ ܫܓܝܐܐ. ܘܐܘܒ ܦܢܝܐ ܘܫܦܝܪܐ ܒܗܘ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܕܡܠܘ
ܠܒܢܝܫܬܐ ܘܡܘܢܝܢ ܢܬܘܗܘܢ. ܟܕ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܢܐ ܚܦܝܛ ܐܝܟ ܠܗܝܢ:
ܕܗܘܟ ܙܢܝܢ ܡ̈ܠܐ ܘܐܪ̈ܒܥܐ ܠܒܢܝܢܘܗܝ ܫܢܝ̈ܐ: ܐܡܬܐ ܕܙܢܝܢ ܗܘܐ
ܕܦܐܡ ܒܟܠ ܐܪܒܐ ܘܢܛܪ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܡܢ ܓܡܬܗ: ܡܩܝܡ ܐܢܐ
ܕܛܘܒ ܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܒܒܟܠܡܐ ܕܗܘܟܢ ܠܐ ܢܙܡܛܐ܀

2. ܩܕܡ ܛܠܝܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܦܢ ܕܢܝܫܐ ܕܙܪ̈ܐܐ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܟ
ܒܫܘܡܗܘ. ܛܪܐܡ ܐܝܟ ܣܟܝܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ̈ܢ. ܗܘܘ ܕܝܢ
ܙܢܝܢܐ ܘܣܢܘܐܐ. ܙܢܝܢܐ ܦܠܛܐ ܘܡܡܣܒܐ ܐܘܟܝ ܗܘܘܐ
ܠܐܡܕܗܐ. ܘܣܢܘܐܐ ܡܕܒܪܐ ܘܡܢܝܫܐ ܐܘܟ̈ܗܘܢ ܢܘܪܐ. ܒܟܠ
ܣܟܘܬܐ ܠܟܦܘܕܟܘ ܙܟܘܬܗ ܐܦܠܐ ܪ̈ܘܚܐ. ܘܐܦ ܫܘܡܐ ܡܕܝܡܐ
ܕܒܗܘܠܝܢ ܘܟܡ ܗܘܠܝܢ ܣܟܝܛܐ ܘܡܕܢܚ̈ ܡܢܗ ܕܐܡܪ.
ܕܗܘܢܬܘܬܗ ܘܡܦܫܘܬܗ ܘܒܗܘܫܡܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܠܝܢ ܐܦܠܐ
ܒܟܠܡ ܡܠܐܟܐ. ܦܓܪܐ ܘܢܦܫܐ ܫܘܬܐܦ ܡܬܟܫܫܝܢ ܒܗܘܠܝܢ
ܒܟܠܗܘܢ: ܐܦ ܗܘܘܐ ܗܘ ܒܫܘܢ ܡܦܟܒܗܘܢ ܒܪܓܫܬܐ. ܐܢ
ܒܦܓܪ ܗܘܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܓܪ ܠܐ ܢܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܐܡܪ ܢܕܘܟܐ܀

3. Woe to me, who always delight my soul in hearing these things from the mouths of those who are accustomed to them, while I am deprived and empty of their sweet savor. My God, grant me to announce what is yours from my own experience and not just repeat what I hear. They say that in the intoxication of these things, if the members of the body did not succumb while the person lays prostrate on his face, he would remain there until his soul departs from him, forgetting the necessities of life. But he draws his soul away from its realm, to these things of the body on account of the severe dryness of its members.

3. ܘܢ ܟܠ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܢܘܩ̈ܦ ܒܫܡܫܬܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܡܢ ܦܘ̈ܩܕܢܐ ܕܡܬܒܪܐ ܢܦܫ ܡܫܟܚܢ ܐܢܬ: ܟܕ ܡܢ ܠܡܫܬܠܡܘܢ ܠܟܝܢܐ ܘܫܪܝܪܐ. ܠܗܝ ܫܡܥ ܟܠ ܕܐܦ ܕܡܢ ܕܟܠ ܐܡܪܐ ܟܠܐ ܕܟܠܝ: ܘܠܐ ܐܗܘܐ ܒܟܝܢܗ ܡܛܠ ܡܫܒܚܐ. ܐܡܪܢ ܕܒܪܘܚܬܐ ܕܒܗܠܝܢ: ܠܗܘ ܗܕܝܩܝ ܦܫܪܐ ܠܐ ܐܫܟܚ ܗܘܐ ܟܕ ܙܕܩܐ ܟܠܐ ܐܦܩܘܗܝ: ܦܠܓܪ ܗܘܐ ܒܕܡܐ ܕܐܬܪܘܡܝ ܢܦܫܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ: ܡܢ ܠܐ ܒܗܘܕܝܐ ܕܫܟܝܢܬܐ ܕܡܘܢܡ ܝܬܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܢܬܠܦ ܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܕܟܠܗ ܟܘܬ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܟܠܗ: ܡܢ ܒܫܫܘܬܐ ܕܢܘܟܚ ܗܕܡܘ̈ܗܝ ܀

LETTER 35

[On the hour of death]

1. My brother, you wrote to me: "Perhaps your final departure will occur and I will be afflicted." If this happens, do not be sad for this is truly my expectation and my earnest desire regarding my Lord: that in that hour no one but He be there to help me and to close my eyes; and that when I lay prostrate on my face, I may attain to this with desire for Him. Many times this hour is nearer to me than that which gives joy or that which grieves.
2. As to what you have asked me, I am ashamed to write to you. May the Lord grant me to be really what you suppose about me! But until now I am no different from the hog which is tied by the widow in front of its stall: this is all which I resemble! And those who bring others down from the vault of heaven, from where will they bring me down? And what resemblance will they impute to me who am more vile than this? They themselves truly bear this likeness in all their actions. And this is their task which they accomplish, according to their inheritance, for any one who would listen to them.[1]

[1] The sense of this obscure passage may hinge on the distinction John makes between image (*salmâ*) and likeness (*dumyâ*); see Letter 29.1. And here John admits to not having accomplished this work of transformation begun at baptism whose goal is Christ, the image of God (*demûtâ dalâhâ*), whereas the saints invoked in prayer from the vault of heaven have done this work, as have those invoking them.

ܕܐܬܝܢ ܘܢܦܩܝܢ ܒܠܐ ܡܫܬ ܡܘܬܐ.

1. ܕܒܐܟܬ ܠܢ ܐܝܢ: ܕܕܟܝܐ ܢܦܫ ܠܟܢ ܣܘܥܪܢܐ ܕܫܘܟܠܢܐ:
ܘܐܡܟܢ ܐܘܟܪܢܐ. ܐܝܟܘ ܕܐܬܘܐ ܗܘܐ: ܠܐ ܐܬܝܫ. ܕܐܦ ܗܘܘ
ܫܘܦܢ ܘܫܘܘܦܢ ܕܟܘܬܐ ܡܢܢ. ܕܒܦܟܬܐ ܗܘ ܠܐ ܢܬܟܢ
ܠܢ ܐܢܐ ܘܐܝܕ ܟܢܝܐ ܫܬܪ ܡܢܗ. ܕܟܡ ܙܒܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܟܠܐ ܐܦܢ:
ܒܢܝܬܐ ܕܟܗ ܠܗܘܐ ܐܡܟܢ. ܘܐܟܢܝ ܫܝܢܝܐ ܡܢܝܟܐ ܗܘ
ܠܢ ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܗܟܢܝܢ ܕܦܢܝܢ: ܘܡܢ ܗܟܢܝܢ ܕܡܟܢܝܢ܀

2. ܐܡܬܝ ܕܝܢ ܕܢܦܩܬ ܡܢ ܥܠܡܐ ܟܡ ܦܘܬܐ ܐܢܐ. ܢܬܠܠ
ܡܢܝܐ ܦܫܟܢܘܬܟ ܕܟܟܢ ܟܟܦܪܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܕܟܠܠ ܠܐ ܦܢܝܢ
ܕܟܬܟܐ ܡܢ ܕܝܢܪܐ ܕܐܫܢ ܠܐܪܡܟܬܐ ܡܢܡ ܐܘܪܚܗ. ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܡ
ܐܬܟ ܒܟܠܐ ܕܡܢܘܬܟ. ܘܗܘܟܢ ܕܦܢܬܡ ܡܢ ܒܦܬ ܫܡܝܐ:
ܡܢ ܐܡܟܐ ܐܬܬ ܟܗܘܢ ܕܢܬܘܢܢ. ܘܐܝܕܐ ܕܡܢܘܬܐ ܐܬܬ ܟܗܘܢ
ܕܒܝܪܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܐ ܕܢܬܟܗܘܢ ܟܢ: ܕܐܦ ܗܘܢ ܕܘܡܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ
ܫܡܝܟܢ ܒܟܠܐ ܫܘܟܪܢܗܘܢ. ܘܟܡܟܟܗܘܢ ܗܘ ܕܢܦܟܢܗܘܢ
ܟܢܪܘܬܗܘܢ ܟܟܠܐ ܕܟܗܘܢ ܦܫܢܢ܀

LETTER 36

1. To the one who has renewed himself, to him may be applied the simile of the guest of the tanner![1]
2. If in spite of your sun the night comes upon you, lament and increase your sighs until the Sun whose brightness is without limits shines forth in your place. He will compose pleasant hymns there, full of joy. I myself sang a sweet sounding hymn, my Beloved heard it and awoke from his sleep. He listened to it for it was sweeter to Him than all else. His sleep has fled and in eternal wakefulness He remains with me. He says to me while rejoicing: "Prolong your hymns and extend your chants! Open your doors and we will enter your inner rooms! And henceforth murmur in secret and put your enemies to shame, who while they are buffeted by your chant do not hear its sound."[2] I have a mystery! I have a mystery![3] I have a mystery together with my friends! For our pleasure is in ourselves, because our King is within us.
   Blessed are you O Zion, for you thirsted for the wine which gladdens all and became drunk. You have forgotten what is yours and you have become crazed by the inebriation of his love. In his light your eyes have become blind and your heart has become illumined with his beauty because in this beauty is hidden the Babe who brings forth all into his beautiful world.

[1] Acts 9:43; 10:6, 32.

[2] Evagrius, *Pratikos* # 47; see Bamberger, *Evagrius*, 29. Devils only perceive what is audible.

[3] Is. 24:16, Peshitta.

ܟܘ

ܕܛܠܝܢ ܘܩ̈ܫܐ.

1. ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܗ̤ܘ ܠܗ ܕܡܬܘܬܐ ܕܐܘܪܚܗ ܕܒܘܪܫܠܐ܀
2. ܐܝ ܟܡ ܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܠܛܠܝܐ ܦܠܚܘ܃ ܗܘܘ ܛܠܝܐ ܘܐܫܟܚܘ ܠܐܬܝܠܬܐ.
ܟܡܘܠ ܕܢܦܫ ܟܠܐܬܪ ܡܫܡܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܠܐܘܚܡ. ܗܘ ܡܕܝܢܬ ܐܡܝܢܬܐ
ܕܗܝܠܝ܃ ܩܠܝܢ ܚܕܘܬܐ. ܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܐܦܪܬܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܡܠܗ. ܘܪܚܘܡܝܢ
ܡܫܡܫܗ ܘܐܬܬܟܪ ܡܢ ܡܠܬܗ ܘܐܬܪܗ ܕܡܫܡܫܬܐ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ.
ܘܦܪܕܬܐ ܡܠܬܗ ܘܟܢܫܘܬܐ ܕܟܠܟܡ ܢܦܘܐ ܠܘܬܝ. ܘܐܡܪ ܠܝ
ܟܕ ܡܦܩܚ. ܐܘܪܝ ܐܡܝܢܬܝ ܘܡܦܫ ܡܝܬܝ ܘܦܬܚ ܠܐܪܥܝ
ܘܢܛܠ ܐܠܘܬܝ. ܘܡܫܡܠܠ ܟܫܡܫܐ ܢܦܫ ܘܐܢܫܘܬܐ
ܠܫܡܫܘܪܝ. ܕܟܕ ܟܐܡܝܢܬܝ ܡܐܦܩܝ܃ ܦܠܗ ܠܐ ܦܫܩܝܢ.
ܙܐܪ ܟܝ. ܙܐܪ ܟܝ. ܟܡ ܙܝܦܝ ܕܟܦܫܝܢ ܟܢ.
ܕܡܠܟܝܢ ܟܠܦܘܢ܀
ܬܫܒܚܝ ܗܫܘܢ܃ ܕܙܗܘܝܢ ܘܪܘܚܝܢ ܟܫܡܪܐ ܡܢܝܪܐ ܟܠ.
ܘܬܫܒܚܝ ܠܟܠܟܝ ܘܡܫܝܚܝ ܟܪܘܡܐ ܙܝܡܠܗ. ܐܦܠܩܝ
ܟܝܬܟܝ ܟܠܗܘܪܗ܃ ܘܝܗܘܪ ܠܟܟܝ ܟܡܦܪܗ. ܕܟܗ ܡܬܬܫܝ
ܢܟܘܕܐ ܡܘܟܝ ܟܠ ܟܠܟܠܗ ܦܫܪܐ܀

3. How desirable and lovable You are, O Child! The desire of You takes souls captive. My soul has gone out after You and when it looks intently within itself your beauty appears there. It sees your image, O Image of your Father,[4] and in You it embraces him. How pleasing and lovable You are, O Like unto your Father! How sweet and pleasant You are! Your sweet savor is known only to those who experience You. I breathed your sweet fragrance and my heart was transported within me. Whoever would explain this is not able, but whoever has heard Simeon and also is united to the One who was his,[5] he will understand this. Whoever has walked in Simeon's footsteps will come after me and may we not depart from our way! I see you who denied at the door,[6] carrying in your bosom him who he briefly carried at his chest.[7] Whoever understands this will take refuge in silence. For the One who from within goes towards our inner rooms, our imprudent tongue makes Him run out the door.
4. Close your doors, Jerusalem, so that your Spouse might remain within you! Keep your windows closed to prolong the fragrance of his ointments![8] When your doors are opened and you look here and there, seeking Him in vain,[9] you will wet your cheeks with your tears but not find Him, or if you do find Him it will be with difficulty, not freely with love. Then guard the doors with caution lest what occurred before happen to you again.[10] Because if you do not do this, you will deliver Him into the hands of the insolent[11] and my own joy too will be changed into mourning. My friend, embrace what is yours and make supplication that what is mine may be also like yours.

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[4] Image of your Father, *demûtêh dabûk*, see Letter 29.

[5] cf. Lk. 2:28.

[6] Jn. 18:6.

[7] As in Letter 30.3, John may be speaking here of spiritual birth and the apparent paradox of a denier of Christ, Simon Peter (*Šemʿun*), participating in this reality which John compares to the physical contact of Simeon (*Šemʿun*) and Christ, see Lk. 2:28. Beulay interprets it in this way, although the text is problematic. See Beulay, ES, 475–81. On spiritual birth, see Brock, "Mary and the Eucharist," 58–59.

[8] cf. Cant.1:3.

[9] cf. Cant.3:2.

[10] cf. Jn. 19:17.

[11] cf. Matt. 26:45.

3. ܡܐ ܪܒܝܢ ܐܢܬ ܘܪܚܝܡ ܐܢܬ ܐܘ̄ ܒܟܘܕܐ܆ ܘܪܓܬܝ ܦܓܠܐ
ܢܦ̈ܫܬܐ. ܢܦܫܬ ܢܦܫܟ ܒܠܙܡ. ܘܟܢ ܗܘܝ ܒܗ ܡܕܘܐ܆ ܠܟܝܗ
ܡܢܗ ܠܗ ܡܦܩܢܝ ܕܢܚ܆ ܘܠܒܒܘܬܝ ܕܒܘܬܗ ܕܐܚܘܝ ܢܦܫܐ܆
ܘܠܗܘ ܚܝ ܡܫܟܢܐ. ܡܐ ܦܫܪ ܐܢܬ ܘܪܚܝܡ ܐܢܬ ܕܡܠܐ
ܠܐܒܘܗܝ. ܡܐ ܚܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܘܗܘܚ܆ ܘܬܒܥܝ ܠܬܒܘܥܝ
ܒܒܢܘܗܝ ܡܠܐܟܐ. ܫܡܥܬ ܕܢܚ ܒܫܝܢܐ܆ ܘܠܟܝ ܐܬܠܐܝ
ܒܝ. ܘܡܢܗ ܕܢܦܫܗ. ܠܐ ܡܡܢܝ ܡܢܗ ܕܡܡܢܝܗ ܠܡܡܢܝܗܝ܆
ܘܐܦ ܐܬܦܪܣ ܒܝܠܗ. ܒܪܟ ܦܠܚܝ. ܡܢܗ ܕܦܠܚܝ
ܒܡܫܠܡܘܬܗ ܕܬܐܐ ܒܠܐܘܬ܆ ܘܕܠܐ ܕܫܬܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܘܪܚܝ. ܢܦܫܐ ܐܢܐ
ܠܟܝ ܐܘ̄ ܕܒܦܢ ܒܠܠܐ ܠܐܪܒܐ. ܕܠܗܘ ܕܠܐܒܘܙܐ ܠܒܢ ܒܠܠܐ
ܚܕܗ ܒܒܘܒܝ ܠܒܢ ܐܢܬ. ܘܡܢܗ ܕܒܪܟ ܗܘܐ ܒܡܬܠܐ
ܠܓܢܘܗܝ. ܕܗܘ ܕܡܢ ܠܟܝܗ ܢܦܫ ܠܬܠܐܘܬܝ܆ ܠܟܢ ܠܐ
ܗܘܕܐ ܒܬܪܒܐ ܦܫܡ ܪܘܐ ܠܗ܀
4. ܐܚܘܕܝ ܠܐܪܒܥܝ ܐܘܪܫܠܡ܆ ܕܢܦܩܐ ܠܬܒܥܝ ܒܝܘܡܝ.
ܘܡܘܒܝ ܒܘܬܒܝ ܕܠܝܢ ܕܢܚ ܒܡܡܢܘܬܗܝ. ܒܢ ܠܐܪܒܥܝ
ܠܬܦܠܚܘܢ܆ ܘܟܠܐ ܘܟܠܐ ܠܚܘܕܝ܆ ܠܐܒܚܝܗܝ ܘܟܠܬܘܗܝ.
ܘܒܡܒܢܝ ܦܬܒܝ ܠܪܒܥܝ ܘܠܐ ܠܡܒܚܝܗܝ. ܘܐܦ
ܠܡܒܚܝܗܝ܆ ܠܡܒܚܝܢ܆ ܠܐ ܦܠܐܪܘܫܬܚܝܠܬ ܒܪܝܬܐ. ܡܒܝܢ
ܛܪܝ ܠܐܪܒܐ ܒܗܘܢܘ܆ ܕܠܐ ܝܢܒܫܒܝ ܡܒܝܢ ܕܢܒܫܒܝ ܒܗ ܡܢ
ܡܒܝܢ ܠܐܚܘܬܐ. ܕܐܦ ܗܘܐ ܠܐ ܠܐܒܒܝܢ܆ ܐܠܐ ܒܗ ܠܡܬܠܒܝܢ
ܒܐܬܪܝ ܡܬܪܚܐ. ܘܐܦ ܚܘܠܝ ܕܟܠܝ ܠܗܦܘܟ ܠܡܪܡܘܕܬܐ.
ܕܣܦܝ ܚܦܫ ܠܒܟܠܝ. ܘܐܬܦܫܦ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܐܦ ܕܟܠܝ ܐܚܝ
ܕܟܠܝ܀

5. Blessed is the one whose altar is within him[12] and the Holy of Holies is inside of him! There, he will hear the voice of God[13] which with one movement shakes and terrifies all of the Rebels. There he will see the thick darkness[14] of that many-splendored light. And in the cloud, the light will be hidden from every vision and from all the viewers.[15] This is the holy place wherein the Most Holy One sometimes becomes visible by the brightness of his flashes of lightning and sometimes conceals his appearance in the thick darkness of his glory in a vision[16] that is exalted above sight and knowledge.
6. When your heart has grown warm, look intently there. When your limbs become loosened in fervor, fall there on your face. And let it be your delight to cry out simply, Father! Father!,[17] rather than to multiply the tears of infants born of the Spirit. This is the freedom[18] of the perfect, those tears being alloyed involuntarily. And when psalmody is sweet for you, you are speechless and astonished when you look intently at your Sun who is shining unhindered in you and within your walls. This is the service which is preferred by *the One who has come to serve.*[19]
7. If you are empty of all virtue and the opposition is stirred up, pray this prayer secretly and incessantly: "My God, instruct me and strengthen me!" This suffices at every moment in this life because it appears as a sign in the heart to the Omniscient One: "Instruct me, my Lord, that I may know all your will and strengthen me that I may fulfill it. Instruct me that I may know the tricks of the demons and all that is adverse, and fortify me that I may conquer all of this." This comprehensive prayer of few words but great meaning, I have found to be more effective than every other.

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[12] On the interior liturgy and the altar of the heart, see Aphrahat, Demonstration 23:59. But especially in the Book of Steps 12.2, the image of the interior church of the heart is developed. See Kitchen, *Book of Steps*, 119–126. See also S. P. Brock, "The Spirituality of the Heart in Syrian Tradition," *Harp* 1 (1988): 93–115.

[13] cf. Num. 7:89.

[14] Ex. 20:21; thick darkness (*ʾarpellâ*), see Luibheid, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, Letter Five, 265.

[15] cf. Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mys. Theol.*, 1:3.

[16] Vision (*hézwâ*), see Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mys. Theol.*, 2:1.

[17] Rom. 8:15.

[18] Freedom (*pârêsiyâ*).

[19] Mk. 10:45.

5. ܛܥܡܘܗܝ ܠܡܢ ܕܡܕܒܚܗ ܒܗ܆ ܘܡܕܘܡ ܡܩ̈ܕܫܘܗܝ ܠܓܘ ܡܢܗ܆ ܘܠܡܢ ܢܩܡܘܢ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܡܠܟ̈ܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܕܒܥܘܒܐ ܡܕܒܪ ܘܡܦܩܕ ܠܡܬܪ̈ܘܬܐ ܒܥܠܘܗܝ܆ ܘܐܡܢ ܢܚܬܐ ܒܪܩܠܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܗܘ ܦܓܪ ܙܩ̈ܝܦܐ. ܘܒܗ ܢܛܥܢܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܡܢ ܟܠ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܗ̇ܘ ܐܬܪܐ ܡܪܝܡܐ. ܕܒܗ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪ̈ܝܡܝܢ ܒܪܡ ܒܪܝܫܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܡܫܒܚܐ܆ ܘܒܪܡ ܒܡܫܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܘܒܠܗ ܠܚܝܠܬܗ ܡܢܦܐ܆ ܒܝܕܐ ܗ̇ܘ ܙܡܢ ܡܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܒܝܬܐܠܐ܀

6. ܡܠ ܕܒܝܫ ܠܟܠܢ܆ ܠܐܡܢ ܐܢܐ. ܡܠ ܕܐܬܠܐܘܢ ܗܘܡܬܝ ܒܙܐܢܐ܆ ܠܐܡܢ ܦܠܐ ܟܠܐ ܐܦܬܝ. ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܙܒܝܢ ܠܟܝ ܠܟܡܐܪܐ ܐܚܐ. ܐܚܐ. ܒܠܚܘܕ܆ ܚܠܦ ܡܢ ܕܒܦܫܝܩܘ ܕܡܠ̈ܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܪ̈ܐ ܡܟܬ̈ܒܢ ܡܢ ܙܘܚܐ. ܗܕܝܢ ܦܐܪܘܣܝܐ ܕܓܡܬܪ̈ܐ. ܟܕ ܒܠܒܠܗܝܢ ܒܗ ܐܦ ܗܠܝܢ ܠܐ ܕܒܢܝܢܬܐ. ܘܟܕ ܢܠܐ ܠܟܝ ܘܡܦܪܐ܆ ܐܡܪܬ ܐܢܬ ܠܟܝ ܘܐܡܪ܆ ܟܕ ܡܠܐܟܝ ܐܢܬ ܒܡܩܡܝܢ܆ ܕܟܝ ܘܒܐܦܩܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܠܐ ܒܟܢܝܢܬܐ. ܗܘܐ ܗܘܝ ܠܡܫܡܫܬܐ ܕܓܒܠܐ ܒܬܪܐ ܕܢܦܫܟ܀

7. ܘܐܦ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܛܟ̈ܣ ܫܡܝܫ ܐܢܬ܆ ܘܕܥܘܡܪܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ܆ ܙܠܐ ܓܘܢܝܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܚܝܠܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܦܫܩ. ܠܐܠܘܗܝ ܢܩܡܝܢ ܘܢܚܠܝܢ. ܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܟܠ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܒܗܘܠܝܢ ܚܝܠܐ. ܒܝܕܥܬܐ ܗܘܬ ܕܒܟܠܝܠ ܠܢܦܫܟ ܟܠܐ ܡܠܐܟܝܬܐ. ܢܩܡܝܢ ܡܢܟ ܕܐܘܪܟ ܓܒܝܢ ܒܟܠܗ܆ ܘܢܚܠܝܢ ܕܐܬܓܡܪܘܗܝ. ܘܢܩܡܝܢ ܕܐܘܪܟ ܦܘܪܫܐ ܕܩܠܕܐ ܘܟܠܗܝܢ ܕܥܘܡܪܐ܆ ܘܢܚܠܝܢ ܕܐܬܪܝܐ ܠܟܠܗܝܢ. ܗܘܐ ܓܒܠܬܐ ܢܚܘܡܬܐ܆ ܐܟܘܪܬ ܡܡܠܠܐ ܫܡܝܢܐ ܫܩ̈ܝܠܐ. ܠܟܝ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܫܒܚܐ܀

LETTER 37

[On the lack of consolation]

1. You have asked me about my condition and I do not know what to tell you because of the variations.[1] At times I am full of life and sometimes death roars against me in my limbs. At times I kill life and sometimes the dead kill me.[2] At times I am cut off from all in union with the One and sometimes I am mingled with all. And I greatly marvel at this, that the Spirit of Life permits change so that the dead might have power to oppress. But He does this as an admonition lest we eagerly breathe the odor of the dead.
2. You also ask me: "What is it that consoles you?" The trees of this mountain and of the Lord's mountain are enough for my consolation, so that I may fly from one to another until I find the Tree of Life[3] and I hide in it and take rest there. From its fruits we fill our granaries and our winepresses, and we take our food and our drink. Its shadow protects us from the heat and we find in it a place of protection from the intense cold. No ice is found in our place because He has kindled his fire within it. And night has no power over his light: He makes the beauty of his vision to shine and we have no need of the sun.[4] Our clothing is the garment which He borrowed from us for his covering,[5] and we do not need the wool of sheep.

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[1] Variations, changes (*šuhlâpê*), John describes what is meant by changes: afflictions, adversities, frequent sufferings, darkness of soul, depression, cold feelings, tumult, gloom, doubt, and despair of life. See Discourse 6, "On the visitations bestowed on solitaries," Vat. 124, 294 a–b. Abba Isaiah notes similar changes; see de Broc, *Abbé Isaïe*, Logos 24. Shemʿon the Graceful makes the awareness of changes to be an essential part of a Solitary's life in the cell; see his "Discourse on the Consecration of the Cell" in Bettiolo, *Violenza e Grazia*, 134–169. See also A. Louf, "Introduction à Syméon de Taibouteh," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 64 (2002): 30–33.

[2] Life: of the passions; dead: the demons.

[3] cf. Gen. 2:9; 3:22. See Tree of Life, Letter 39.3, 5.

[4] Apoc. 22:5; 21:23; Is. 60:19.

[5] Christ's human nature: on this exchange of garments, see Brock, "Robe of Glory," 251. See also Brock, "Clothing Metaphors."

ܠܐ

ܕܠܬܡ ܘܩ̈ܒܠ ܟܠ ܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܒܘܝܐܐ.

1. ܟܠ ܐܚܝܘܬܐ ܕܡܚܣܢܬ ܠܟ: ܠܐ ܢܒܥܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܚܡ ܡܛܠ
ܗܘܢܟ̈ܠܐ. ܒܪܡ ܒܛܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܚܝܐ: ܘܒܪܡ ܦܘܠܐ ܢܩܘܡ ܒܝ
ܒܗܘܕ̈ܩܝ. ܒܪܡ ܚܝܐ ܦܛܠ ܐܢܐ: ܘܒܪܡ ܡܝ̈ܬܠܐ ܦܛܠܝܢ
ܠܟ. ܒܪܡ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܣܘܢܩܐ ܕܚܣܝܪ: ܘܒܪܡ
ܣܟܝܬܐ ܕܟܠܠ. ܘܟܠܟܘܕܐ ܠܟ ܡܬܕܡܪ ܐܢܐ: ܕܪܘܚ ܚܝܐ
ܐܬܪܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܟܘܢܝܐ: ܕܡܬ̈ܬܐ ܢܦܬܠܛܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܡܘܦܣܐ. ܐܠܐ
ܗܘܐ ܟܕܡ ܡܛܠ ܐܗܘܪܐ. ܕܪܚܝܐ ܕܡܬ̈ܬܐ ܒܢܥܠܬܐ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ
ܦܫܝܩ܀

2. ܘܕܬܠܟܠܝܢ ܕܡܢܗ ܒܘܝܐܐ: ܦܫܝܩ ܠܟ ܠܒܘܝܐܐ ܐܠܟܢ
ܬܘܪܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܕܬܘܪܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ. ܕܡܢ ܚܕ ܠܒܝ ܐ̇ܦܪܝܚ ܒܕܡܘܬܐ
ܕܐ̇ܡܝܢ ܠܐܠܗܝܢ ܚܝܐ ܕܒܗ ܐ̇ܬܐ ܘܒܗ ܐܬܬܢܝܚ. ܘܡܢ
ܦܐܪܘܗܝ ܐܕ̈ܪܝܢ ܘܡܬܒܪ̈ܟܝܢ: ܘܐܬܒܟܝ ܘܡܫܡܫ. ܘܡܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ
ܛܠܠܗ ܡܫܬܪܪ ܠܝ. ܘܡܢ ܡܘܪܟܐ ܒܗ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܝ ܕܟܠܠܐ
ܠܡܫܬܪܐ. ܘܥܒܕܐ ܒܐܠܦ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܠܚܝܢ: ܕܢܘܪܗ ܐܘܝܪ
ܒܥܘܗ. ܘܟܠܠܐ ܡܢ ܢܗܘܪܗ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܐܠ. ܦܪܘܩ ܡܘܦܩܐ
ܕܚܝܠܗ. ܘܠܐ ܡܫܝܢܝܢ ܟܠ ܡܡܠܐ. ܠܟܘܢܝ: ܒܘܝܐܐ ܕܡܪܟ
ܡܢ ܠܡܫܬܡܥܢܗ: ܘܠܐ ܡܫܝܢܝܢ ܟܠ ܟܬܠܐ܀

3. And if his Spirit speaks within us, what use for us in conversations? If those who dwell in its branches (Tree of Life) and do not dwell on the land mingle with us, why would human fellowship of men be necessary for us? If for our delight, we breathe his fragrance with desire, who is able to force us to breathe the odor of foul lust? If our own soul flies to his bosom, and our own heart rejoices and exults at his appearance, who will bring back to us the memories of the sea which drowns those who swim in it, and the joy whose end is lamentation? Who has tasted the fruits of his sweetness and wants to steal the fruits of the slayer? Why do you suffer that we have not house, or shelter, or human company, or human things? Is it not better to be a dweller in the Builder of our house[6] and be in the custody of the Guardian of our city? And if there was not a resting place for David until he found Him,[7] how is it we seek repose outside of Him?
4. Those who eat the Bread of Life do not die[8] and those who drink of Him, from the inebriation of it, no longer remember what is theirs. In their drunkenness they have forgotten all their possessions. They are wounded and do not suffer. They do not eat and are not hungry. They do not drink and are not thirsty. They do not sleep and are not weary. They weep while rejoicing. They cry out while exulting. They die and are radiant because death shows them the face of their Lord and they do not remember the life ending in death.[9]
5. Considering for whose sake I write these things, my heart does not reprove me because my face is open towards the face of my Lord.

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[6] cf. Ps. 127:1.

[7] Ps. 132:4–5.

[8] cf. Jn. 6:50.

[9] Beulay notes that John only once uses the term impassibility (*lâ hâšôšûtâ*). But he describes it in various ways such as in this paragraph where it is a participation in the life after the resurrection and given only briefly in this life. It is the opposite of the *šuhlâpê* described above. The roots of impassibility and immutability lie in the Two Ages doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia. "What pleased God was to divide the Creation into two states: the one which is present, in which he made all things mutable; the other which is future, when he will renew all things and bring them to immutability." A quote from the Fifth General Council found in R. A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 161. The Two Ages doctrine is also basic to Cyrus of Edessa; see W. F. Macomber, "The Theological Synthesis of Cyrus of Edessa, an East Syrian Theologian of the Mid Sixth century," *OCP* 30 (1964): 5–38; 363–384.

3. ܐܘ ܪܘܚܗ ܡܡܠܠܐ ܒܟܝܢܝ܇ ܡܛܠ ܐܬܒܢܝܬ ܒܟ ܒܒܢܝܢܐ. ܐܘ ܢܠܒܫ ܒܬܫܡܫܬܗܘܢ ܕܠܐܪܥܐ ܠܐ ܫܒܩܝܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܢܗܠܟܘܢ ܒܟ. ܣܒܪܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܒܢܝܢܐ ܡܬܒܢܝܢܐ ܒܟ. ܐܘ ܠܒܘܫܗ ܕܪܘܚܗ ܒܪܝܟܬܐ ܫܡܫܝܢ܇ ܕܪܚ ܕܪܟܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܡܢܗ ܡܫܡܫ ܚܙܐ ܒܟ. ܐܘ ܢܦܫ ܒܟܘܒܗ ܠܚܘܒܐ܇ ܘܒܟܝ ܢܒܐ ܘܪܘܪ ܒܚܝܠܗ܇ ܒܗܘܢ ܝܗܒ ܢܦܫ ܠܡܫܝܚܘܬܗ܇ ܘܚܕܘܬܗ ܕܚܕܬܗ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܐ. ܡܛܠ ܢܫܐ ܠܒܘܪܟܐ. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܬܒܥܝ ܦܐܪܐ ܚܠܒܘܬܗ܇ ܘܪܒܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܬ ܦܐܪܐ ܦܬܘܬܐ. ܡܛܠ ܢܛܪ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܟܠ ܒܟ ܒܟܠ ܘܫܠܡܐ܇ ܘܐܝܟܐ ܘܐܝܬܝܐ. ܠܐ ܦܣܩ ܒܟ ܒܘܡܪܐ ܕܒܒܢܝܗ ܕܒܟܠܝ܇ ܘܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܕܡܪܟܝ. ܐܘ ܕܡܢ ܒܟܠ ܒܟܗ ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܢܚܬܐ ܒܡܪܟܐ ܕܒܟܗ ܕܡܢܚ܇ ܚܝ ܢܚܬܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܗ ܐܝܟ ܫܒܝܚ܀

4. ܐܦܠܘܗܝ ܕܒܚܡ ܚܝܐ ܠܐ ܫܠܡ. ܘܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܒܗ܇ ܦܬܓܡܘܗܝ ܠܡܠܟܘܗܝ ܠܘܬ ܠܐ ܫܘܕܝ. ܛܠܘ ܒܪܘܚܬܗܘܢ ܒܠܐ ܡܣܬܝܗܘܢ. ܡܠܦܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܢܠܦܝܢ. ܠܐ ܐܬܒܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܫܡܝܢ. ܠܐ ܫܠܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܪܡܝܢ. ܠܐ ܕܫܒܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܠܐܝܢ. ܫܒܝܢ ܒܢ ܢܒܝܢ. ܫܒܝܢ ܒܢ ܪܘܚܝܢ. ܫܠܡܝܢ ܘܦܪܝܚܝܢ܇ ܕܐܦ ܡܪܗܘܢ ܫܘܬܐ ܡܢܝܘܬܐ ܠܗܘܢ. ܒܚܝܐ ܕܫܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܫܘܕܝ܀

5. ܡܛܠܠ ܕܒܗܬܐ ܡܢܗ ܗܘܒܝܢ ܫܠܒ ܐܝܬ܇ ܠܐ ܫܘܪ ܒܗ ܒܠܒܝ. ܕܒܟܝܢ ܐܦܝ ܠܐܦܝ ܡܪܝ܀

LETTER 38

1. I know you, O strong man in the Lord, you hide your treasure and you beg from a poor man. Blessed is the one whose treasure is within him and who is not nourished from outside. Blessed is the one whose sun rises from within, blocking the powers of sight which perceive the external sun, powers which hinder those powers which perceive the interior sun. Blessed is the one whose hearing is closed to amusing sounds and he inclines to hear the stirrings of the fiery ones and the utterance of their crying "Holy." Blessed is the one whose breath is of the Holy Spirit and even the odor of his body is tempered by the One who takes delight in fragrant herbs.[1]
2. Blessed is the one whose soul is moistened with the sweetness of his God and even his bones receive their marrow from Him! Who will explain this blessing? Not even the spiritual <beings are able>! Blessed is the one to whom is revealed the place to which he is traveling and who burns with desire for it! Blessed is the one who knows the place of understanding and who perceives that there are no intelligent ones there: he understands a great mystery! Blessed is the one who obtains permission to enter that place and who here below makes friends with those who are there! Blessed is the one who is astonished by the beauty of these things and forgetting what fills with error those who stray, he himself becomes an ignorant one!

[1] Cant. 4:10.

ܕܐܬܟܠܡ ܘܐܬܩܢ.

1. ܢܒܥ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܝ ܐܘ ܒܪܬܐ ܒܐܪܝܘܬܐ: ܕܬܫܒܘܚܬܝ
ܡܛܠ ܐܢܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܚܕܪܐ ܫܠܝܐ ܐܢܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ
ܕܫܒܚܬܗ ܒܟܠܗ. ܘܡܢ ܠܟܪ ܠܐ ܐܬܬܪܫܝ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ
ܠܒܢܝ ܕܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܗ ܕܢܚ: ܘܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܠܒܪ
ܐܢܫ ܡܢ ܕܚܕܘ. ܕܩܪܝܢ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܠܟܠܗ.
ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܗ ܫܒܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܫܡܝܢ ܢܚܬܐ:
ܘܪܥܝܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܘܐܟܢ ܢܘܪܐ ܘܠܟܝܐ ܕܡܘܕܝܢܘܬܗ.
ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܫܡܘܗ ܪܚܡ ܡܘܕܥܐ ܗܘ: ܘܐܬܦܢܝ ܐܦ
ܪܚܡ ܒܫܡܗ ܒܗܘ ܕܐܬܚܫܡ ܒܗܪܘܡܬܐ܀

2. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܐܬܛܒܥܬ ܢܦܫܗ ܒܚܠܡܐ ܠܠܗܘܢ: ܘܐܦ
ܒܪܡܘܗܝ ܡܢܗ ܒܢܗ ܕܗܘܝܐ. ܒܢܗ ܕܢܦܫܗ ܠܛܒܬܐ ܐܦܠܐ
ܪܘܚܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܐܬܗܪܐ ܕܚܘܡܝܗ ܒܠܐ ܠܗܘ:
ܘܠܐܡܢ ܒܪܒܐ ܡܦܠܠܗܘܢ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܢܚܐ ܠܐܬܪܐ
ܕܢܚܬܐ: ܘܐܫܠܡܘܠܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܬܐܡܢ ܢܗܪܟܐ. ܐܫܠܡܘܠܐ ܪܐܙܐ ܪܟܐ.
ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ ܕܒܝܐ ܦܫܫܐ ܕܡܟܠܟܠܐ ܕܠܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ:
ܘܠܐܢܟܢ ܕܬܐܡܢ ܡܢ ܗܘܟܐ ܢܟܪܐ ܒܟܢ ܐܢܝ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝ
ܕܐܬܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܡܘܦܪܐ ܕܗܘܟܢ: ܘܛܒܢܘܢ ܠܟܦܠܐ ܛܘܒܢ
ܠܛܒܬܐ: ܘܗܘܐ ܗܘ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܟܐ܀

3. Oh! how amazing are your mysteries, O our God, who can believe them! My heart is transported at the remembrance of them and the limbs of my body come apart at their sweetness. I forgot what is mine by meditating on these things which I cannot approach, and in my desire I compel the Giver. I even forgot what is his, yet it is He whom I strive to receive. I seize Him but He is not held. I catch Him but He is not captured. When I am full, I am empty. And when I hold Him, He isn't there. Yet when I dwell in Him, He dwells in me.
4. When He is hidden from me, I am hidden in Him. And when I wish to see Him, I see that He is within, but from whence He comes I know not. Wherever I lead Him, He resists me: when clothed,[2] He will not remain and when stripped, He does not depart, but when left alone, He does not stay. When He goes with me to a place, He does not move from the place. But when I catch Him, He is full of sweetness. Then when I let Him go, He conceals Himself. When I obey Him, He speaks with me, but when I touch Him, He is not moved. When I walk with Him, as extended as He is outside of me, He dwells in me. When I inhale Him, He comes from within. And when I see Him within all, He assumes and covers all. When I see Him who carries all, I carry Him and go off.
5. Just how far will the appearance of the external sun indicate to you about his inwardness which shines over all? As you carry the brightness of the sun on your shoulder, so also you carry Him, but within you. And as you can see, here below the sun is everywhere; likewise He is in every place.
6. Glory to You who are hidden from all but to those who love You, You are manifest without interruption. O Darkness multi-splendored, O Light which because of the intensity of its brightness is comparable to thick darkness! Glory to You from all and on us be your mercy! Amen.

[2] Clothed, perhaps by trying to visualize Him.

3. ܐܘ̄ ܡܐ ܥܡܝܩܝܢ ܒܫܒܝ̈ܠܝܟ ܐܠܗܝ܆ ܘܡܢܘ ܢܘܣܡ. ܐܣܬܓܝܢ
ܠܟܢ ܒܟܘܗܘܕܢܝܗܘܢ܆ ܘܐܬܦܫܩܘ ܗܕ̈ܡܝ ܦܓܪܝ ܒܣܟܘܬܗܘܢ.
ܬܚܘܬ ܠܕܝܢܟ ܒܗܘܓܝܐ ܕܗܘܟܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܦܪܝܫ ܐܢܐ. ܘܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ
ܒܪܓܬܐ ܠܥܢܘܘܬܐ. ܬܚܘܬ ܠܕܝܢܟ. ܘܟܠܗ ܠܡܫܡܫܘ ܡܬܚܝܪܐ
ܐܢܐ. ܐܚܝܕ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܬܚܝܕ. ܙܥܘܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܬܙܥܪ. ܟܕ ܡܠܐ
ܐܢܐ ܣܦܝܩ ܐܢܐ. ܘܟܕ ܐܚܝܕ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܒܗ ܚܡܝܪ
ܐܢܐ ܒܗ ܚܡܝܪ܀

4. ܘܟܕ ܓܫܡܐ ܡܢܝ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܐܢܐ ܒܗ. ܘܟܕ ܪܓܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܢܗܪܐ
ܐܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܓܘܗ ܐܬܘܗܝ. ܘܡܢ ܐܝܟܐ ܐܬܐܘܗܝ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ.
ܘܠܐܝܟܐ ܐܘܒܠܘܗܝ ܦܪܕ ܡܢܝ. ܘܟܕ ܠܟܝܬ ܠܐ ܡܦܣܐ. ܘܟܕ
ܡܚܒܫ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܪܐ. ܘܟܕ ܡܚܒܫ ܠܐ ܦܐܫ. ܘܟܕ ܟܡܢ ܐܪܝܟ
ܠܒܘܝ. ܡܢ ܕܡܘܬ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܐܚܕ. ܘܟܕ ܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܡܫܬܡܠܐ. ܘܡܢ
ܕܐܬܦܠܓܗ ܫܪܝܐ ܠܗ. ܘܡܢ ܕܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܡܫܬܟܠܠ ܒܟܝܢܝ. ܘܟܕ
ܚܦܝܦ ܐܢܐ ܒܗ. ܠܐ ܡܬܬܐܚܕ. ܘܟܕ ܡܬܩܪܒ ܐܢܐ ܒܗ. ܦܪܩ ܒܝ
ܘܦܩܝܕܬܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܒܪ ܡܢܝ. ܘܟܕ ܫܐܠ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ. ܡܢ ܠܒܪ
ܢܦܩ. ܘܟܕ ܢܗܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܒܓܘ ܟܠ. ܠܟܝܢܗ ܠܟܠ ܘܡܢܝܢܐ.
ܘܟܕ ܢܗܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܕܠܟܠ ܠܒܝܢ܆ ܠܒܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܘܐܦܠܐ ܐܢܐ܀

5. ܘܡܢ ܐܝܟܐ ܘܠܐܝܟܐ ܦܪܘܫܘܬܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ ܠܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ ܒܟܠ ܒܫܘܝܘܬܗ
ܘܢܣܒܬ ܒܟܠ. ܕܐܝܟ ܕܗܢܝܢ ܐܝܬ ܠܗܘܢ ܟܠ ܒܗܦܝܢ܆ ܗܢܝܢ
ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܘܒܢܝܢ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܒܐܝܬܘܬܗ ܗܘܝܐ܆ ܗܘ ܗܘܝܐ ܠܗ ܒܟܠ
ܐܬܪ܀

6. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܟ ܕܓܫܡܐ ܐܝܬ ܡܢ ܟܠ. ܘܡܫܬܪܝܢܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܦܣܩ ܕܢܝܢ
ܐܝܬ. ܐܘ̄ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܦܓܝܥ ܙܕܝܩܐ܆ ܘܗܘܕܪܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܟ ܕܝܠܟ ܘܚܝܠܗ
ܒܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܬܐ܆ ܠܟ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ܆ ܘܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܥܕ̈ܢܝܢ
ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 39

1. These things which your love has demanded, my brother, are of those who bear the marks of Jesus[1] in their crucified members[2] and not our slothful and slack ones. Indeed, I have no authority over such things from the treasury[3] of the Life of all that is Christ; I am not his treasurer. I am full of all bad things and my rational mind is blinded by the visions of the world and it is not able like Paul to look at the reflection in a mirror.[4] Nor am I able to declare: *For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," He has himself shone forth in our hearts*;[5] as also the Splendor of the glory of the Father said: "Blessed are those who are pure in their hearts, for *in their hearts they will see God*!"[6] This is the Kingdom which He said that *it is hidden within us*[7] and is revealed to the pure.

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[1] Gal. 6:17.
[2] cf. Gal. 5:24; Rom. 6:6.
[3] cf. Matt. 13:52.
[4] cf. 1 Cor. 13:12.
[5] 2 Cor. 4:6.
[6] Matt. 5:8.
[7] Lk. 17:21; Matt. 13:4.

ܟܛ

ܕܐܠܗܝܢ ܘܐܢ̈ܫܐ.

1. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܒܥܝܢ ܗܘܝܢ ܐܢܫ܆ ܕܬܚܘܝܬ ܡܘܫ̈ܚܬܗ ܕܩܘܫܬܐ ܒܗܘܢ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܕܡ̈ܝܬܐ ܐܬܚܙܝܘ܆ ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܘܡܩ̈ܫܬܐ. ܠܐ ܚܙܝܢ ܡܫܡܫܬ ܐܢܐ ܒܟܠ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܝܢ܆ ܡܢ ܦܘܫܩ ܚܙ̈ܐ ܕܟܠ ܡܬܡܢܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܡܬܥܒܕܘܬܐ. ܡܟܝܠ ܐܝܬ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܢ̈ܝܫ܆ ܘܫܡܬܐ ܡܢܒܝܢ ܒܢܝܘܬ ܒܒܝܬܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܡܫܒܚ ܒܡܫܢ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܢܗܝܪܐ ܦܘܬܚܫܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܡܫܒܚ ܐܢܐ ܒܡܐܡܪ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܢܚ. ܗܘ ܕܢܚ ܒܒܒ̈ܠܝ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܗܘܒܢܗ ܕܐܒܐ ܐܡܪ܆ ܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ ܒܕܘܟ ܒܒܒܗܘܢ܆ ܕܒܒܒܗܘܢ ܢܚܘܢ ܠܐܒܘܗܝ. ܘܗܘܐ ܗܘ ܡܒܒܘܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܒܥܘ ܕܡܢ ܡܬܡܢܐ ܘܡܫܬܒܚܐ ܒܒ̈ܝܐ܀

2. Nor am I able to hear the hidden mysteries and to say: "God has revealed this to us by his Spirit[8] who dwells in us,[9] who knows the depths[10] and utters them in us."[11] I am thirsting for the Living Waters, because I have not run to the source of blessings who calls to me with my companions: *Whosoever thirsts let him come to Me and drink*![12] Behold the prophet severely reproves me and his voice is hoarse from crying out to me: *O all who thirst, go to the waters*![13] Indeed, while from the heart of those who have drunk insatiably of Him, *streams of living water flow from their heart*[14]—these being the insights into the mysteries and the explanation of the parables—I have not yet become Jerusalem, the city of Christ, the eternal King. I confess that I am still Babylon and that unclean peoples dwell in me, that is, the passions of fornication, abominable to the Bridegroom, fairer than all.
3. *If you sell these things of yours*,[15] you may purchase for yourself that One who was sold for thirty pieces.[16] If you seek the Beautiful One, the desire for Him will torture you always. If you delight in this desire, his love will be in you incessantly. If you wish to find this One, keep the commandments. If you wish to see the One who is, why do you look with desire at that which is not? If you wish to put on the garment of light, why do you notice the imprints[17] on the garment of your soul? If you desire the Tree of Life in your paradise, why not uproot from it the one of good and evil?[18] If your soul is Jerusalem lauding Christ,[19] why are the sons of Babylon wandering in its streets?

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[8] cf. 1 Cor. 2:10.
[9] cf. Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16.
[10] cf. 1 Cor. 2:10.
[11] cf. 1 Cor. 2:13.
[12] Jn. 7:37.
[13] Is. 55:1.
[14] Jn. 7:38.
[15] cf. Matt. 13:44–46.
[16] Matt. 26:15.
[17] According to Letter 15.3, these imprints would be "…images of the world, dead idols engraved in it."
[18] cf. Gen. 2:9; Tree of Life: this image is already prominent in Ephrem for whom Christ is the Tree of Life who gives "blessed fruits" to the baptized at the Eucharist. See Brock, *Luminous Eye*, 96. In the Book of Steps, all of Memra 21 is dedicated to the Tree of Life: "The good tree in that world of light invisible to the eyes of the flesh, is Our Lord Jesus. He is the tree of life who gives everything life by its fruits wherever the perfect will of God is, as Our Lord said, 'Pray so that the will of God might be on earth as it is in heaven'." See Kitchen, *Book of Steps*, 231–249. In 3 Enoch 5, "under the tree of life" is where the Shekinah dwells. Gruenwald thus sees this as a counterpart to theophanies in the Temple and on the throne of Glory. See I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkabah Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 50–51.
[19] cf. Matt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9.

2. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܦܫܩ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܫܡܫ ܪ̈ܐܙܐ ܒܫܝܢܐ ܘܠܡܬܐܡܪ. ܕܡܢ
ܟܠ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܒܪܘܚܗ ܕܡܢ ܠܥܠ. ܢܦܫ ܒܡܫܝܚܘܬܗ
ܘܠܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܡܫܟܠܠܐ. ܪܗܛܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܫܝܐ ܚܝܐ: ܒܟܠܐ ܪܘܚܬܐ
ܕܝܢ ܫܡܘܥܐ ܠܬܘܒܐ. ܕܫܪܐ ܒܗ ܒܡܢ ܣܓܝܐ. ܕܫܢ ܕܪܘܚܐ ܒܠܒܐ
ܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܥܬܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܗ ܢܝܚܐ ܡܫܝܚܝܬ: ܘܢܗܪܐ
ܡܠܗ ܠܡܫܡܠܐ ܠܗܘܢ. ܕܐܦ ܒܟܠ ܕܪܘܫ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܫܝܐ.
ܐܠܐ ܒܪܝܟ ܕܐܬܝܗ ܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܫܒܩܬ: ܡܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܪܘܚ
ܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܡܫܝܐ ܚܝܐ: ܕܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܙܕܩܐ ܘܦܘܫܩ ܩܠܐ.
ܠܐ ܒܕܡܠܐ ܦܘܠܬ ܠܗ ܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܡܕܝܢܬܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܠܟܐ
ܕܠܥܠܡܝܢ. ܦܘܕܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܒܕܡܠܐ ܒܟܠܠܐ ܐܝܟ. ܘܡܫܡܫܢܐ
ܬܫܒܚܐ ܠܡܪܢ ܒܗ. ܕܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ ܚܝܐ ܐܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܕܝܢ ܠܚܝܠܬܐ
ܥܬܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ܀

3. ܐܘ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܟ ܠܐܪܥ: ܠܟܡ ܠܦܘܢ ܕܐܪܥܐ ܒܐܦܝܐ
ܠܟܠܐ. ܐܘ ܠܡܦܫܪܐ ܦܓܠܐ ܐܢܬ: ܦܬܓܡܗ ܠܦܫܡܝܢ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ. ܐܘ
ܠܗܘܐ ܕܢܝܡ ܐܢܬ: ܣܘܓܗ ܕܠܐ ܦܫܛ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܝ. ܐܘ ܠܗܘܢܐ
ܙܒܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܕܠܐܒܝܢ: ܠܙ ܦܘܩܕܢܐ. ܐܘ ܠܦܘܗ ܕܐܬܠܘܗܝ ܙܒܠܐ ܐܢܬ
ܕܠܐܝܕܐ: ܒܦܘܗ ܕܠܟܬܘܗܝ ܠܡܘܬ ܒܪܥܠܬܐ ܢܐܙ ܐܢܬ. ܐܘ
ܠܒܘܫ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܙܒܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܕܠܒܫܗ: ܬܫܒܚܐ ܒܠܒܘܫ ܢܫܡܝ
ܡܢܘ ܢܪܐ ܐܢܬ. ܐܘ ܐܒܠ ܚܝܐ ܒܦܪܝܫܝ ܕܢܝܡ ܐܢܬ: ܕܬܫܒܠܬܐ
ܘܕܒܫܬܐ ܡܢܗ ܠܡܘܬ ܠܐ ܟܡܪ ܐܢܬ. ܐܘ ܢܫܡܝ ܐܘܪܫܠܡ
ܡܪܝܬܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܗܘ: ܡܘܬ ܦܬܓܡ ܒܡܘܬܗ ܒܟܝ
ܒܟܠܟܠܐ܀

4. Thus I heard in the place without sound: "If your place is not known; if your location is not special; if your work is not mixed with others; and those who dwell with you are silent; and you do not return a greeting to those who pass along the way;[20] and you have not walked on a trodden path: then sell your clothing for thirty pieces[21] and the world of light will be your portion." I rejoice in these things which I see, but these inaudible things make me rejoice even more. Blessed is the One who is diligent, for here below he will find all these things which have been cited.
5. Even if you did not turn aside and did not walk in the dark place of robbers, it is certain your way is oppressive. If your labor wearies you, you have not seen any fruit; if hunger afflicts you, you have not tasted the Bread of Life; if thirst torments you, the Source of Life is far from you; if in your paradise stands the One who tests freedom, you yourself stand naked and ashamed for you have no shelter[22] under the Tree of Life: go within yourself that you may see all which is outside and put out what is within, that the familiar ones driven out may enter for rest. Then the Builder will dwell with joy in his house.
6. Raise your dead by the One killed outside of the law;[23] destroy your adversary by the hidden life. Do not burden yourself with armor which is not invincible. If you have been illumined by the Master from his light, you also see in their light those who were illumined before you.[24] But if you did not accept this light, you will observe perfectly the second;[25] and with the first ones, you will make your dwelling. If thus He makes you blind to everything, the First is the Last who is received.[26]

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[20] cf. Lk. 10:4.

[21] Matt. 26:15, indicating little money such as the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32) for the "clothing" which is the garment of this life.

[22] cf. Gen. 3:10.

[23] cf. Jn. 19:7.

[24] See Macarius 15.38: "Similarly, as many lamps are lighted from the one, same fire, so also it is necessary that the bodies of the saints, which are members of Christ, become the same which Christ himself is." Found in: *Pseudo-Macarius: The Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter*, trans. George A. Maloney (CWS 123, 1992). See also A. Orlov and A. Golitzen, " 'Many Lamps Are Lightened from the One": Paradigms of the Transformational Vision in Macarian Homilies," *VC* 55 (2001): 281–298.

[25] "Second" here refers to rational beings united to the bodies. "First ones" are the first beings, i.e., the angels. This is according to an East Syrian variation of an Evagrian interpretation. See Evag. Cent. I:50, 61. See also A. Guillaumont, *"Kephalia Gnostica"*, 241–242; 283.

[26] cf. Rev. 1:17; 22:13; Is. 44:6.

4. ܗܘܝܢ ܡܫܬܡܠ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܠܐ. ܕܐܦ ܐܬܪܘܗܝ ܠܐ ܕܢܚܐ ܗܘܘ܂
ܘܕܘܒܪܝ ܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ܂ ܘܫܘܠܛܝ ܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܚܐ܂ ܘܦܘܩܕܢ ܕܡܫܪܪ
ܠܡܫܪ ܫܠܝܡܝܢ܂ ܘܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܠܒܢ̈ܝ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܠܐ ܩܒܠܬ܂
ܘܒܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܪܘܚܬܐ ܠܐ ܗܠܟܬ܂ ܠܥܘܠܡܝ ܐܪܥ ܒܠܠܝ̈ܐ܂
ܘܡܠܟܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܡ̈ܢܬܗܝ. ܢܟܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܢܟܪܐ ܐܢܐ. ܦܪ̈ܘܫܝ
ܠܟ ܡܠܝܢ ܗܘܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܡܫܬܒܩܢ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܕܐܬܦܪܫ܂ ܕܡܢ
ܗܪܟܐ ܐܥܒܪ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܗܘ ܫܪܪܐ܀

5. ܐܝܟ ܠܡܫܬܥܪܝ ܠܐ ܩܒܠܬ܂ ܘܫܘܘܚܠܦܐ ܠܐ ܗܠܟܬ ܒܐܬܪܐ
ܕܝܠܝܕ̈ܐ܂ ܕܝܠܝ ܗܘ ܡܫܬܚܠܦ ܕܢܝܚܐ ܗܘ. ܐܦ ܒܡܫܬܚܠܦ
ܡܫܬܒܠܠ ܠܝ ܦܠܐܪܐ ܠܐ ܕܝܚܠܬ ܒܗ. ܐܦ ܒܫܦܝ ܡܫܬܩܠ ܠܝ܂
ܠܫܘܬܦ ܚܝܠܐ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܒܩ. ܐܦ ܪܘܚܐ ܐܠܗܝ ܠܝ܂ ܡܫܬܘܝܢ ܚܝܠܐ
ܪ̈ܓܝܫ ܠܝ. ܘܐܦ ܒܦܪ̈ܕܫܝ ܦܐܝ ܚܙܪ ܕܐܬܪܘܬܐ܂ ܐܝܟ ܠܝ
ܐܝܡܟܐ ܒܪ̈ܛܝܢܐ ܚܘܫܒܬܐ܂ ܕܫܠܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܩܒܠܬ ܠܐܝܟܐ ܐܝܟܢܐ
ܕܚܝܠܐ. ܒܘܠܐ ܠܚܘܒܗ ܡܢܝ. ܕܠܝܕܐ ܟܠܐ ܕܠܒܪ. ܐܝܟ
ܕܠܚܘܒܗ܂ ܕܒܠܒܗ ܠܒܢܝܢܐ ܒܬܠܬܐ ܠܡܪ̈ܝܐ. ܘܡܬܠܐ ܒܚܝܘܬܐ
ܦܪܐ ܒܠܒܗ ܒܢܝܐ܀

6. ܢܝܚ ܗܘܠܝܢ ܒܫܠܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܝܚܘܬ܂ ܚܪܘܒ ܠܡܬܚܒܒܝܢ
ܒܫܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ. ܠܐ ܐܫܬܒܩ ܢܝܚܝ ܒܪܡܐ ܕܠܐ ܪܡܐ. ܐܦ ܡܢ
ܡܬܒܥܐ ܐܬܢܘܪܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܗ܂ ܐܦ ܠܡܬܚܙܝܢ ܐܬܢܗܪܘ
ܒܢܘܗܪܗܘܢ ܢܟܪܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܐܦ ܒܗܘܢ ܡܬܚܙܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ܂ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ
ܒܡܬܚܙܝܢܐ ܢܟܪ ܐܢܐ. ܘܠܘܬ ܡܬܚܙܝܢܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܢܟܪܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܐܦ
ܗܘܝܐ ܒܫܬܩܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܡܫܬܩܠ ܠܝ܂ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܐܝܟܢܐ
ܕܡܬܚܙܐ܀

7. Woe to me if until now I show my love to my friends only by these lines! Woe to me if I still console myself with the black ink of mourning, and do not see my Life beyond the dead! Woe to me if seeing mine though not united, I visit them only by means of a vision through the senses and I announce Life to them with a mortal word! Woe to me if there are still found in my region, mountains, high places, valleys, and plains! Woe to me if a border be joined to my world and if a single stirring[27] be found in me! Woe to me if I abide alone by myself and am not found at one with the Unique! Woe to me if a shadow is found in my Sun and if I only see what is in front of my face and not within me.
8. I must rise up above my place while not seeing anyone one of mine who would think these things of me or gaze on them as though they were mine. The one who is unaware considers me as his, and steals what is not his so that he steals from thieves what they themselves have stolen.[28] Come after me and see if you are in the truth. Walk on a little until the one who has preceded you remains at your side and you will know from where I say these things.
9. Alas, perhaps you will say: "There is no one who holds my hand that I might go up these steps." Then seek yourself the way to its summit, there you will find the One who will take you and bring you to these pleasures. If you do not wish to delay, lighten your course; if you desire to find, do not waste time; if you are looking for the haven, do not be agitated.

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[27] Stirrings (*zawʿê*) and wonder (*tehrâ / témhâ*) occur in the soul as it journeys from glory to glory, but the ultimate condition is one of stupor (*témhâ*): "And every degree they ascend in glory they suppose to be the last. Then when they next enter into the vision they are exceedingly astonished at the light. They have fallen back into their first stage and supposed that this was the ultimate end, because there was not sufficient impulse (*zawʿâ*) in them. One pulsates at every mansion with desire for increase. The visionary power is filled with wonder over the glorious sight, void of impulses (*zawʿê*), in ecstasy (*témhâ*), and alternately experiencing sweetness and exultation in pleasure." See Discourse 14, Vat. 124, 319b; see also Vat. Syr. 125, 186b as found in Beulay, "Lettre XV," 273–274.

[28] Here John, in his humility, considers any seeming virtue of his to have been stolen and not truly his own, and he wishes this to be known by others.

7. ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܕܐܡܠܠ ܒܣܘܪܬܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܢܐ ܚܘܒ ܠܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ.
ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܕܐܡܠܠ ܒܐܘܡܢܘܬܐ ܒܚܘܒܝ ܢܦܫ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܐܢܐ:
ܘܚ̈ܝܝ ܠܒܪ ܡܢ ܡܠܬܐ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܠܐܘܠܦܢ
ܕܠܒܝ ܒܗ ܠܐ ܚܟܝܡܬܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ: ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܒܪ̈ܢܫܘܬܐ ܒܚܘܒܝ
ܦܩܕ ܐܢܐ: ܘܒܡܠܬܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܚܝܠܐ ܡܦܩܕ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܠܗܝ. ܘܐܢ
ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܕܐܡܠܠ ܒܐܪܥܐ ܛܘܪܐ ܡܚܝܡ ܒܗ: ܘܛܘܪ̈ܐ
ܘܡܘܬܐ ܘܦܓܥܐ. ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܠܡܠܡܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ ܢܡܘܣ
ܠܗ: ܘܒܗ ܡܚܝܡ ܠܒ ܪܘܚܐ ܠܚܘܒܐ. ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ
ܠܚܘܒ ܠܚܘܒܐܝܬ ܢܟܒ ܐܢܐ: ܘܚܕ ܠܚܒܝܒܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܒܩ ܐܢܐ.
ܘܐܢ ܒܥܐ ܠܝ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܕܡܠܠ ܡܚܝܡ ܒܗ ܛܠܠܐ: ܘܡܠܘܡܠܠ
ܐܦ ܒܚܘܒܝ ܢܕܪ ܐܢܐ܀

8. ܐܢܫ ܠܟܠ ܕܘܡܠܟ ܒܝ ܠܐ ܢܕܪ ܐܢܐ: ܒܗܘ ܡܢ ܕܡܠܟ ܕܒܠܒ
ܗܠܝܢ ܪܢܐ: ܘܐܝܟ ܕܒܡܠܟ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܢܐܪ. ܘܠܐ ܡܦܩ
ܒܡܠܗ ܢܦܫ ܠܒܝ: ܘܦܪܥ ܠܗ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܕܡܠܗ.
ܕܠܟܠܝܐ ܠܒܝܬܐ ܢܣܒܘ ܠܗ. ܐܠܐ ܒܐܪܥ ܘܒܪܟ ܠܝ ܫܪܪ
ܐܢܬ. ܗܠܝܢ ܦܠܓܠܐ ܒܝ ܦܐܫ ܡܢܝ ܩܘܡܝ: ܘܐܪܥ ܡܢ
ܐܝܟܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ܀

9. ܐܘ ܕܢܫܐܠ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܬ. ܠܟܠܗ ܠܒܝ ܦܡ ܕܐܝܟ ܒܐܪܒܥ ܕܒܪ̈ܒܝܬܐ
ܗܠܝܢ ܦܠܚ ܐܢܐ. ܡܕܡ ܓܒܝ ܠܟܝ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܢ ܪܫܝܬ: ܕܐܡܪ
ܠܒܝܬ. ܐܚܘܕܐ: ܕܢܦܠܚܢ ܠܗܠܝܢ ܒܗܫܬܐ. ܐܝ ܠܦܘܡܐ ܠܐ
ܪܢܫ ܐܢܬ ܐܝܟܠܐ ܪܘܚܝ. ܐܝ ܠܡܦܠܚܬܐ ܦܠܐ ܐܢܬ. ܠܐ ܬܬܬܗܐ. ܐܝ
ܠܠܐܝܬܐ ܡܦܩܬܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܐ ܬܬܪܗܪ܀

10. But what could concern me here in all of this, standing in a place which is not mine, and where I wage a battle because of those who are unaware of who I really am, a sinner? To my own, I offer this as bait to catch the hunter.[29] O Christ, Haven of all the mysteries, explain these things to your friends! Whoever would become a seer of all and a chosen dwelling of the Omniscient, let him understand!
11. One thing I ask of you and all these things I will give you: render this which you have borrowed and take all of these. You will say: "This is obscure!" But to the illumined ones it is a manifest light. Do you not know the hidden things? Then, how come you deal secretly with what is yours? Reveal what is yours to the Hidden One and He will reveal to you what is his. If you do not learn of Him from what is his, you are not dwelling in his habitation. And if you see Him in what is yours, grasp herein this great reality.
12. If a mother is in the pains of childbirth why would you ask for a kiss? It is a difficult thing for the discerning to learn foolish wisdom![30] However, as for me, the wise man I seek is the one who hides wisdom and thereby deceives the one who is not wise! There is nothing more sublime to the Most High than that which is despised by all.[31] The Beginning and the End[32] and the Sum of all, let Him be the limit for what is yours and by these things steal them away. Hide then your treasure: this treasure which when hidden slays the loathsome thieves.

[29] Hunter: one seeking Christ, as noted by Beulay.
[30] cf. 1 Cor. 1:27.
[31] cf. 1 Cor. 1:28.
[32] cf. Rev. 22:13.

10. ܘܡܢܐ ܠܟ ܗܘܕܐ ܥܠܝ ܒܠܒܗ܂ ܕܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܝܠܝ ܩܐܡ ܐܢܐ܂
ܘܒܗ ܡܪܝܪܐ ܦܫܐ ܐܢܐ܂ ܡܛܠ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܡܦܝܣܝܢ ܒܝ.
ܠܗܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܝ܂ ܗܠܝܢ ܪܚܡ ܐܢܐ܂ ܒܢܦܫܐ ܠܒܪܘܗ ܕܪܢܝܐ.
ܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܕܥܠܝ ܪ̈ܐܙܝ܂ ܦܫܛ ܗܠܝܢ ܠܩ̈ܢܘܡܝ. ܡܢܘ
ܕܢܗܘܐ ܚܕܐ ܥܠܝ܃ ܠܡܫܪܐ ܚܒܠܐ ܕܢܦܠ ܥܠܝ. ܢܫܬܒܩܠܝ܀

11. ܚܕܐ ܗܝ ܕܒܥܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܟ܂ ܘܗܠܝܢ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܠܟ ܝܗܒ ܐܢܐ.
ܦܪܘܫ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܐܝܬܠܝ܂ ܘܫܒܘܩ ܗܠܝܢ ܒܠܗܘܢ. ܚܫܘܒ
ܗܠܝܢ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܠܒܘܫܪܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܟܚܕܐ. ܠܐ ܝܗܒ ܐܢܐ
ܒܫܪ̈ܝܬܐ܂ ܘܡܢܐ ܕܝܠܟ ܒܫܠܝܬܐ ܫܒܩ ܐܢܐ. ܟܠܗ ܕܝܠܟ
ܠܒܫܝܢܐ܂ ܘܫܐܠ ܠܟ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܗ. ܐܦ ܡܢ ܕܝܠܗ ܠܐ
ܢܒܥܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ܂ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܒܘܡܪܗ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ. ܐܦ ܒܕܝܠܟ
ܚܕܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ܃ ܒܥܘ ܗܘܪܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܪܒܬܐ܀

12. ܘܐܦ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܦܫܛܐ ܢܟܪܝܬܐ. ܢܬܩܫܬܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ.
ܠܫܡܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܩܪ̈ܘܒܐ ܬܠܟܒ ܕܫܡܠܬܐ ܦܬܘܪܬܐ. ܐܢܐ ܕܝܢ
ܢܫܡܐ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ ܕܒܫܡܠܬܐ ܡܬܘܡܐ ܘܟܢ ܒܗ ܠܟܠܐ ܢܫܡ.
ܠܟܠܗ ܕܡܫܒܚܐ ܠܟܘܠ ܙܒܢ܂ ܡܢ ܗܝ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܓܒܪܐ. ܫܘܪܝܐ
ܘܫܘܠܡܐ ܫܡܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܒܗ ܫܦܝܪ ܕܝܠܟ܃ ܘܒܗܘܢ ܠܗ
ܟܢ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܒܠܠ ܛܥܡܐ ܫܒܝܠܟ. ܗܝ ܕܒܝ ܡܬܠܛܡܐ
ܦܬܐܠܐ ܠܚܘܒܐ ܫܒܝܠܬܐ܀

13. If you are a friend of God, why have you divinized yourself falsely and created what He did not create? Pass on a little from here, that you might accomplish what is beautiful. If there is shadow in your place and your world is temporal, stand at the foot of the mountain[33] and be ashamed that you did not give up the world and did not receive the eternal One. Let me now tell you this as an abuse fitting the remiss, until you truly see the light of Him who sees all and know that what you considered to be true is false. Persevere yet a little in the place that is difficult for you, if the light does not yet shine from the lamp of your ascetic life.
14. Because you asked me secretly about these lofty things whose elucidations are only revealed to the pure, I laid down for you here all these exalted things. But if you desire more obscure things I will send them to you by the strength of Our Lord: these things which if you gathered many teachers around you, they would not be able to show you what they are.

[33] cf. Ex. 19:17.

13. ܐܘ ܪܚܝܡܐ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܬܐܡܪ܆ ܒܡܬܠܐ ܕܓܠܝܬܐ ܐܬܐܠܨܬ܂ ܘܐܝܟܢ
ܕܗܘ ܠܐ ܓܒܪܐ܂ ܟܒܪ ܐܝܬ܂ ܓܒܪ ܦܟܝܗܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܦܟܐ܆ ܕܐܬܦܬܚ
ܠܦܘܡܗ ܗܟܢ ܕܦܣܩܬܝ܂ ܐܘ ܒܐܬܪ ܬܟܠܐ܆ ܘܒܟܬܒܝ
ܐܚܝܢܐ܆ ܒܡܫܩܠܢ ܛܘܪܐ ܦܘܡ ܒܝ ܥܒܝܬ ܐܢܬ܂ ܕܠܐ ܢܩܘܒܠ
ܒܟܬܒܐ܆ ܘܢܩܒܠ ܡܫܬܡܥܢܐ܂ ܦܘܡ ܠܟ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܗܘܐ
ܠܪܘܚܬܐ ܕܡܠܟ ܠܥܒܕܐ܂ ܒܝ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܠܐܝܕܐ ܢܗܘܪܗ ܕܢܗܪܐ ܒܟܠܐ܆
ܘܗܟܢ ܕܡܢܬܝ ܢܣܒܬ ܠܝ ܕܒܢܝܟܢ܂ ܐܝܟ ܒܗ ܡܟܝܠܐ
ܒܪܘܚܬܐ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ ܠܝ܆ ܐܘ ܠܐ ܕܟܠ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܒܟܬܒܝ
ܕܘܒܪܝܟ܀

14. ܕܢܬܠܒܟ ܡܢܟ ܡܬܬܟܠܢܐ ܡܢܬܐܠܬܐ ܕܢܗܘܪܘܢ ܕܟܠܝܢ
ܒܟܢܘܢ ܟܘܒܬܐ܆ ܦܩܘܕ ܠܝ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܒܟܘܢ ܬܘܕܝܬܐ܂ ܐܝܢ
ܕܫܩܦܬ ܥܠܝ ܥܒܕܐ ܐܢܬ܂ ܡܦܝܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܝ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܡܪܝ܆
ܐܝܟܢ ܕܐܘ ܠܦܝܫ ܠܝ ܫܘܟܬܐ ܕܡܬܟܫܢܐ܆ ܠܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܝ
ܡܢܗܘܢ܀

LETTER 40

[About a beautiful meditation]

1. To those on whose intellect the Spirit of Life has been breathed[1] by Jesus, the Only-Begotten Word, our incorporeal Sun, a sight has been given them by Him unimpeded by anything. Just as the physical eye has power over all that is in existence because the created sun has the power to pass by it with its radiance, and its own view is extended without hindrance: so also it is for the spiritual eye which has obtained sight from Christ by means of purity, in that God is its Sun and He is stretched over all and in all without hindrance; likewise its own sight when it has acquired union with Him is stretched out over all and in all and above all, and all is a clear place for it. Who is able to prepare remedies for the eyes yielding light such as this? And all remains within him and he abides above all in a place of wonder and astonishment where there is no vibration and no motion, not bodily, not even belonging to the spirit, because he is joined in a union higher than any union, not even cognizant that he is in it.
2. O Mercy, how You abound! He who was scattered and dissipated, You have made recollected and unified. Who will bring him back to himself if not He who by his sign,[2] gathering all together into one,[3] summons those who are spread like particles of glass in the sand?

[1] cf. Jn. 20:22.
[2] Sign (*rémzâ*).
[3] Matt. 24:30, 31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16.

ܡ

ܕܐܪ̈ܒܥܝܢ ܡܛܠ ܗܘܪܓܐ ܦܫܝܪܐ.

1. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝܕܥ ܠܟܘܠܗܘܢ ܪܘܚ ܚܝܐ ܡܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܡܣܝܟܐ
ܗܡܝܡܢ ܡܬܝܕܥܢܐ ܠܡܘܠܕ: ܚܙܝܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܚܟܡܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܡܕܡ ܡܛܠܗ
ܠܟܘܢ ܐܬܝܕܥ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܟܝܢܐ ܡܬܪܓܫܢܘܬܐ ܡܫܢܐ ܡܘܟܠܢܐ
ܕܟܠ ܕܡܢ ܗܘܐ: ܕܡܡܠܠܘ ܡܢܐ ܡܘܟܠܢܐ ܕܢܕܥ ܒܗ ܟܕ
ܕܡܣܗ. ܐܦ ܣܓܝ ܕܝܠܗ ܡܬܦܫܛ ܒܗ ܕܠܐ ܟܠܢܫ. ܗܟܢܐ
ܐܦ ܟܝܢܐ ܡܬܝܕܥܢܘܬܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܚܙܝܐ ܡܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܟܕ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ:
ܒܗܘ ܕܡܡܠܠܘ ܐܠܗܐ ܗܘ: ܘܦܫܛ ܒܟܠ ܟܠ ܘܒܟܠ ܕܠܐ
ܟܠܢܫ. ܗܟܢܐ ܐܦ ܣܓܝܐܘ ܕܝܠܗ ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܒܥܡܗ ܚܝܘܬܐ:
ܡܬܦܫܛܐ ܒܟܠ ܟܠ ܘܒܟܠ. ܘܒܟܠܟܠ ܡܢ ܟܠ. ܘܐܬܪܐ
ܗܟܢܐ ܗܘ ܒܗ ܟܠ. ܡܢܗ ܕܗܦܝܟ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܗܡܝܡܢܐ
ܢܘ̈ܗܪܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܝܐ. ܘܟܠ ܒܟܠܐ ܡܢܗ ܢܦܠܘܢ: ܘܗܘܐ
ܒܗܘܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ ܘܕܐܬܗܘܪܐ ܢܦܘܐ. ܐܝܟܐ ܕܠܐ ܪܘܚܐ
ܘܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪܢܘܬܐ: ܠܐ ܕܦܫܪ ܘܐܦܠܐ ܕܪܘܚ. ܟܕ ܐܬܐܝܕ ܒܚܝܘܬܐ
ܪܘܚܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܚܝܘ: ܟܠܐ ܕܝܠܗ̇ ܕܗܘ ܒܗ܀

2. ܐܘ̄ ܪ̈ܝܫܐ ܡܢܐ ܗܦܝܟܝܢ ܐܢܬܘܢ: ܕܗܘ ܐܪܝܫܐ ܘܡܬܒܪܐ:
ܒܕܝܬܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܪܝܫܐ ܘܡܬܚܕܪܐ. ܡܢܗ ܕܒܗܘܢܐ ܢܛܪܗ ܢܦܫܐ: ܐܠܐ
ܗܘ ܕܠܡܬܒܪ̈ܝܢ ܐܝܟ ܦܬܓ̈ܡܝ ܐܘܢ̈ܓܠܝܘܢ ܒܫܠܐ: ܒܪܡܙܗ
ܒܚܕܐ ܦܫܛ ܢܦܫܐ܀

3. One of the brothers was saying to me: "At first, because my intellect was not accustomed to it, when the light of the Holy Trinity was appearing in it to unite with it in imperceptible simplicity, deprived of understanding because of stupefaction at the light of Life: when it perceived the radiance unifying it, it was overcome with fear that it might never again return to itself." But when the brother became accustomed to the beatitude beyond all blessings and received the experience of its ineffable delight, and felt the strength which he acquired by it against the passions and against the demons: he saw the splendor of his intellect which on account of the beatitude became like God and he saw the familiarity[4] he partook with Him in everything as a son to his father. Thus he was speaking after that: "When the remembrance of the mystery that is to come arises in my intellect, my heart becomes fervent and my intellect is inflamed for the time when it will be held worthy of that glorious vision of the eternal Living One and will delight in its blessing."
4. Blessed is the one who in this world has seen this place and in it has girded himself for the place of joy. This is where its Sun does not set, nor does he see evening because the Sun never leaves. This is where understanding is without limit and also non-knowing is endless.[5] O our Creator, how your mercy abounds! For to those who wish to imitate your consubstantiality, You eagerly desire to give Yourself with what is yours. How wonderful it is in our hard times to see blossoms spring up higher than speech. The excellent treasures which were given from the Father of all to our fathers by his Spirit, today the diligent by their steadfastness openly bring forth these treasures and, behold, henceforth they take insatiable delight in them forever.

[4] Familiarity (*pârêsiyâ*).
[5] Evag. Cent. 3:63.

3. ܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ ܠܝ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܐܚܐ. ܕܒܙܒܢܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ ܡܛܠ ܠܐ ܡܥܝܕܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܢ: ܡܐ ܕܕܢܚ ܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܒܚܘܫܒܗ: ܒܥܒܝܕܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܕܪܟܢܘܬܐ ܘܢܒܝܪܐ ܡܢ ܦܓܪܐ: ܡܛܠ ܒܚܕܘܬܐ ܕܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܚܝܐ: ܡܐ ܕܦܪܢܣ ܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܒܕܡܫܚܐ ܡܢܚܬܗ: ܕܒܟܠܬܐ ܢܦܠ ܗܘܐ ܠܒܥܘܗܝ: ܕܫܡ ܠܘܬ ܠܐ ܦܠܐ ܒܘܠܐ ܢܠܗ. ܡܢ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܬܦܢܝ ܒܗ ܒܛܘܒܐ ܪܡ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܛܘܟܣܝܢ: ܘܢܣܒ ܢܣܝܢܐ ܕܒܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܫܩܐ: ܘܐܪܢܣ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܡܠܐ ܡܢܗ ܟܠ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܟܠ ܩܠܐ: ܘܚܕܐ ܙܒܢܬܐ ܕܗܘܝܗ ܕܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܥܠ ܟܠܗܘܢ: ܘܦܪܗܣܝܐ ܕܡܠܠ ܠܘܬܗ ܒܟܠܡܕܡ ܐܝܟ ܒܪܐ ܙܕܝ ܐܒܘܗܝ. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܘܢ ܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ. ܕܐܡܬܝ ܕܢܦܠ ܒܗܘܢ ܒܗܘܢܗ ܕܪܐܙܐ ܒܠܒܝ. ܙܐܝܢ ܠܒܒܝ ܘܡܫܬܠܗܒܝܢ ܗܘܝܢ: ܕܐܡܬܝ ܢܦܠܬ ܠܒܝܬܐ ܗܝ ܡܒܝܢܬܐ ܕܢܚ ܒܒܩܠܐ ܘܡܬܦܫܩܢ ܒܛܘܒܗ❖

4. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܟܦܢ ܕܡܢ ܚܕܝܘܗܝ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܗܘܐ: ܘܡܢܗ ܢܦܩ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܘܢܪܩܬܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܡܫܡܫܗ ܠܐ ܦܪܥ: ܘܪܡܫܐ ܒܫܘܒܚܗ ܠܐ ܢܬܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܕܥܬܗ ܥܠ ܓܒܪܐ ܗܘ: ܘܐܦ ܠܐ ܝܕܥܬܗ ܘܠܐ ܫܘܒܩܢ. ܐܘ̄ ܡܐ ܫܦܝܪܝܢ ܪ̈ܕܝܡܝܢ ܦܪܘܫܝ: ܕܒܡܕܝ̈ܢܬܐ ܕܫܡܫܘܬܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܝ ܒܢ ܕܠܝ ܡܬܐܡܪ ܐܝܬ ܠܡܬܠ. ܡܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܙܘܡܪܐ. ܕܐܟܢ ܛܝܪܐ ܦܪܚܐ ܪܡܝ ܡܢ ܡܟܠܬܐ ܚܒܝܫܬܐ ܕܦܓܪܝ. ܗܫܩܠܬܐ ܡܠܬܪܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܐܒܐ ܕܟܠ ܠܐܒܘܩܢ ܐܬܩܒ ܒܝ ܪܘܚܗ: ܢܘܡܢ ܒܡܢܬܐ ܒܝ ܚܒܝܪܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܒܢܝܐ ܐܦܣܗ ܐܬܢ. ܘܗܘܐ ܡܒܟܠ ܠܐ ܫܟܠܬܐ ܡܬܦܫܩܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܠܒܒܟܢ❖

5. Oh, what fortitude can do! They have lifted up their intellect, prepared by the eternal Living One for reception of such things, and they have put it in a place preserved from alien sensations where hosts of angels of light hover over in unceasing movement, in an ineffable world. And every now and then they are in an unspeakable union with the angels, with delicate whispers in a tongue not made of flesh, effected by the Spirit, the Paraclete. Then they do not perceive themselves and they are not able to understand what has been done in them since before them is a hedge of mystical silence. Behold, what ineffable amazement, that whatever then is chanted by them they are not able to understand.
6. This has not yet been given fully, however, to the second beings who are united, as it has been given to the first beings.[6] Even though those are prepared for the full and undifferentiated resemblance to them (first beings) which they will have in the worlds to come, and while even here in this place some (of the second beings) are able to understand, yet they are not able to bring forward what is from there to all who are in our world, for between there and here is a boundary of silence. While in that unified place, unifying the divided, they inhale a breath which vivifies the intellect and the soul, in a union higher than these (intellect and soul), having a sweet breath which is moved in them by the Paraclete; they say that this exhalation which vivifies all intellects, goes out also towards those who are still deprived of these things (intellect and soul) and thereby the animate spirit[7] is mysteriously stirred up. And when springs come forth which overflow from the ineffable sea, like unbroken waves of rays of light flooding over them, they forget their nature and do not remember what is theirs. Their intellect is a vessel and a resting place for such things. Though dry, they are never thirsty. Always hungry, they are granaries of life, packed every day.

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[6] John seems here to revert to the original Evagrian thinking that "first being" indicates the intellect and "second being" the body. This would be different from the interpretation in Letter 39.6. But Beulay says that the mention of angels in the preceding paragraph leaves the question open, see LM, 29–31.

[7] According to Beulay, John's use of animate spirit here may be compared to Aphrahat, Demonstration 6:14. Thus the animate spirit is stirred up by the Spirit of Life as mentioned at the beginning of this Letter.

5. ܐܘ̄ ܡܛܠ ܚܒܪܐ ܣܓܝܕܘܬܐ. ܐܪܝܟܘ ܫܡܫܘܗܝ ܠܟܘܠܗܘܢ ܦܠܓܝܢ ܡܢ ܚܕ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ. ܠܡܣܒܠ ܕܕܐܡܪ ܗܠܝܢ: ܒܐܬܪܐ ܚܣܝܪ ܡܢ ܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܢܘܟܪܝܬܐ. ܐܝܟܐ ܕܡܫܬܪܝܬܐ ܘܡܬܠܐܒ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܪܘܟܐ ܠܐ ܫܟܘܢܐ ܡܢܚܩܝܢ. ܒܒܝܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܓܝܢ. ܒܟܝܢܐ ܠܐ ܒܥܒܕܝܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܡܬܢܝܐ ܡܬܐܬܟܪܝܢ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܦܐܪܩܠܝܛܐ: ܒܚܝܠܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪܝܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܐܝܟ ܗܘܝܘ. ܕܝܢ ܗܢܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܢܕܥܝܢ: ܘܠܐ ܠܡܩܕܡ ܕܟܗܢܘܢ ܡܬܐܬܟܪܝܢ ܡܡܠܠܝܢ ܘܡܫܬܒܚܝܢ. ܒܗܘܢ ܕܫܒܩ ܒܐܦܝܗܘܢ ܫܠܡܐ ܚܒܝܒܐ. ܗܘ ܠܐܝܟܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܓܝܢ: ܕܗܘ ܡܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܘܢ ܡܬܚܒܪ ܕܡܫܬܒܚܝܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܝܕܥ ⁘

6. ܘܗܘܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܐܪܥܐ ܠܐ ܐܬܝܗܒ ܒܪ ܫܒܬܐ: ܠܡܫܡܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܟܝܠ. ܒܪ ܘܐܦ ܗܢܘܢ: ܒܟܠܗ ܕܡܬܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܬܐ ܒܠܒܝܢ ܕܗܘܘܢ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܕܐܬܝܢ. ܒܪ ܐܦ ܗܘܟܐ ܡܢ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܫܒܚ ܕܒܟܘܢ. ܠܗܘܐ ܒܠܐ ܕܒܟܠܗܝܢ: ܠܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܠܡܦܠܬܘ ܡܕܡ ܡܢ ܐܡܝܢ. ܕܒܟܠ ܗܘ ܠܗܘܐ: ܫܠܡܐ ܐܬܘܗܝ ܐܝܢܡܐ. ܒܪ ܫܦܝܪ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܢܝܪܐ ܡܢܝܪ ܦܫܝܛܐ: ܫܦܝܪܐ ܡܢܝܪܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܘܕܝܫܐ: ܒܚܝܠܘܬܐ ܪܡܬܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ: ܒܕܝܫܐ ܗܘܝܐ: ܗܘ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܦܐܪܩܠܝܛܐ ܡܬܐܡܪ. ܒܪ ܐܦ ܠܗܘܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܒܪ ܫܒܬܐ: ܐܡܪܝܢ ܕܢܦܫ ܦܘܝܐ ܗܘ ܡܢܝܪܐ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ ܗܘܝܐ: ܘܐܬܬܐܡܪ ܒܗ ܐܦ ܐܢ ܪܘܚ ܚܝܘܬܐ ܪܐܝܬܐ. ܒܪ ܡܦܪܢܝܢ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܡܬܐܩܪܝܢ ܡܢ ܢܣܒܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܓܝܢ: ܗܢܘܢ ܕܒܪܝܟܘܬܐ ܫܟܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܫܩܝܢ ܕܐܟܡܝܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܡܢܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܦܩܕܝܢ: ܘܡܛܝܢ ܒܢܗܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܚܘܕܝܢ ܠܕܝܠܗܘܢ. ܘܐܬܘܗܝ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܠܟܝܢܐ ܘܢܘܚܐ ܒܕܐܡ ܗܠܝܢ. ܠܗܘܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪ ܪܡܝܢ. ܒܩܠܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ: ܘܐܬܪܝܢ ܚܝܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ⁘

7. Well, how sweet your love which inflames those who receive it and makes eager those who seek it! And before whom will these things be laid in the spiritual air that they might be his without his seeking them or abandoning himself and running away from himself, but be raised toward them without delay and consider these things below like dead dogs void of that life which consumes those who love it and makes those who cherish it to perish: this life whose mouth Christ shuts from all who are his! Amen. May He bind their intellect to Himself and soothe their soul with what is his and strengthen their bodies by his mercy in all ages and generations and forever and ever! Amen. May He reconcile and unite all those divided ones, created for unity such as this, and may He kindle in them his fire, this fire which always draws them to unite with Him.
8. Christ have pity on your servants! Have pity, my Lord, and raise up from the world those who have received your love to that place where they have been called by You and give them a complete hatred for this world. O Beloved, lover and loving One, longed for by all, gather to Yourself those who have left the world with all that is in it because of You: that neither existing things nor those to come may be able to separate them from You, nor may they be able to separate themselves from You. Christ, dew of mercy which has been sprinkled from the Eternal Being on our fiery world, moisten the souls who thirst for your life-giving drops, and germinate blossoms in them which will delight them together with the choirs of hosts of your holiness. Fill them with what is yours so that the things here below may not be able to enter their inner room but stay outside the dwelling, looking on from a distance.

7. ܐܝܟ ܠܝܠܘܕܐ ܒܬܡܝܡܘܬܐ܆ ܕܦܪܝܢ ܠܡܩܒܠܘܬܗܘܢ ܘܡܫܠܡܝܢ
ܠܒܢܝ̈ܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܒܐܪܥ ܡܬܝܠܕܝܢ ܠܡܘܠܕܗ
ܒܫܡܝܐ ܡܬܡܠܠ ܕܕܝܠܗ ܐܢܬ. ܐܝܟܘ ܠܡܘܠܕܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܦܠܐ܆ ܘܠܐ
ܢܦܘܩ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܘܗܘ ܡܢܗ ܢܦܪܘܩ܆ ܘܢܬܦܠܓ ܕܠܐ ܠܒܘܫ
ܢܬܟܠܐ܆ ܘܡܢܘܪ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܐܫܬܐ ܒܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܠܡܠܟܘܬܐ
ܫܒܝܚܬܐ ܡܢ ܢܫܡܬܐ܆ ܗܘ ܕܫܪܝܘܬܗ ܡܢܗܪܐ ܘܡܚܡܠܝܢ
ܡܬܚܠܦܐ܆ ܗܘ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܢܦܩܘܪ ܦܘܩܕܢܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܕܕܝܠܗ ܐܝܟ
ܐܡܝܢ. ܘܗܘ ܢܗܘܐ ܡܢܝܚܐ ܕܗܘܢܘܗܝ ܠܗܘܢ܆ ܘܡܫܬܡܫܢܐ
ܕܫܡܗܘܢ ܒܕܝܠܗ܆ ܘܡܢܝܚܢܐ ܕܦܪܢܝܬܗܘܢ ܒܕܝܢܗܘܢ. ܒܟܠ
ܕܪܐ ܘܒܟܠܗܘܢ܆ ܘܟܠ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܐܡܝܢ. ܘܢܐܬܐ ܘܢܬܢ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܦܠܓܘܬܐ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܠܕܝܠܗ ܗܘܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ. ܘܢܫܦܘܪ
ܒܗܘܢ ܢܘܪܗ ܗܘ ܕܒܠܒܘܬܐ ܡܢܗܪܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܚܘܒܐ ܕܒܡܠܘ܀
8. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܢܘܗܪ ܟܠܐ ܓܒܪܝܢ. ܢܘܗܪ ܡܪܢ ܘܫܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܐܢܫܝܢ
ܕܢܦܩܘ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܢ ܒܒܢܝܐ. ܠܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܡܢܝܢ ܐܬܦܪܫܘ.
ܘܗܘܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܫܠܝܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܒܠܥܐ. ܐܘ ܪܚܡܐ ܕܪܢܝܡ
ܘܡܢܗܒ܆ ܘܟܠܐ ܠܗ ܡܬܐܡܪ܆ ܒܢܘܗܪ ܠܐܢܫܝܢ ܕܢܦܩܘ
ܒܒܢܝܐ ܒܗܝ ܟܠܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܬܟܠܠܝܢ ܒܗܝܢ܆ ܘܠܐ ܢܦܩܘܢ ܠܐ
ܕܡܬܡܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܟܠܐܢܝ. ܕܠܗܘܢ ܡܢܝܢ ܢܦܪܫܘ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܗܢܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ
ܢܦܩܘܢ ܕܡܢܝܢ ܒܦܪܫܘܢ. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܕܪܚܡܐ܆ ܕܐܬܪܫܫ ܡܢ
ܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܡܠܘܫܐ ܟܠܐ ܢܫܘܕܘܬܗ ܕܒܟܠܗܝܢ. ܦܪܝܫ ܢܦܫܬܐ ܕܪܩܝܡ
ܠܪܫܝܫܝܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ. ܘܐܦܪܝܥ ܒܗܘܢ ܦܪܝܥܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܢܠܒܫܘܢ܆
ܒܗܝ ܫܘܒܚܬܐ ܕܢܝܚܐ ܡܘܕܝܢ. ܘܡܟܝܠ ܐܢܬ ܡܢ ܕܝܠܝ܆ ܕܠܐ
ܢܦܩܘܢ ܗܘܝܢ ܕܟܠܝܫܬܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܠܡܟܠܠܐ ܠܟܘܢܫܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܢܗܘܘܢ
ܢܝܪܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ܆ ܘܡܢ ܡܦܘܠܐ ܢܫܘܩ܀

9. Blessed are those who give themselves to the practice of purification which liberates from unnatural enslavements and have made of their persons a temple, a house of rest and a dwelling for the One who is the calm weather and the haven for all the worlds. Blessed is the diligent monk who experiences mysterious visions because his intellect never ceases to receive the splendors of the universal Life. Blessed is the one who has seen his true being and does not spend years of his life like a beast. Blessed is the one who in his heart is set a pillar of ineffable light[8] and from whose house the inhabitants do not need to ask about an alien fire.
10. Oh, these unified choirs of swift flight, who chirping and chafing stir up all their own to a flight like theirs: this flight that continually revels in the air which is the breath of the Spirit of the eternal Living One and which never will consent to descend toward the corpses which are in our world. And if there is found among these unified choirs one whose wings the Beguiler has plucked and he is no longer able to be lifted up, they will bear him on their wings and bring him to their Healer. And by means of their intercession He will make him sprout wings of fire, burning the eyes of his enemies.
11. Because even despicable locusts while they are in one band when they arise from their place, twittering to one another, if anyone of them is lame or has its wings pulled off or is not yet endowed because of being little: they will carry it on their shoulders and they will bring it with them to wherever the sign[9] of the One who gives them life sets them in motion.

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[8] cf. Ex. 13:21.

[9] Sign (*rémzâ*).

9. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܗܒܘ ܢܦܫܗܘܢ ܠܦܘܠܚܢ ܢܗܝܪܘܬܐ
ܡܣܪܩܐ ܡܢ ܫܘܥܒܕܐ ܠܐ ܟܝܢܝܐ. ܘܗܘܝܘ ܠܫܘܬܦܘܬܗܘܢ ܐܬܝܗܒ
ܢܘܗܪܐ ܠܥܝܢܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܡܢܗܪܢܐ܆ ܠܗܘ ܕܐܬܓܠܝܘܗܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ
ܘܡܒܘܥܐ ܕܟܠܗܝܢ ܒܠܒܗܘܢ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܟܝܐ ܦܫܝܪܐ
ܦܠܚܝܢ ܒܣܘܪܐ ܪ̈ܐܙܐ܆ ܕܠܐ ܡܠܘܐܢ ܦܠܚܝܢ ܗܘܘ ܡܢ ܙܒܢܝܢ
ܚܝܐ ܒܡܫܝܚܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܦܢ ܕܐܒܐ ܗܘ ܠܒܝܬܗ܆ ܘܠܐ
ܢܦܩܝ ܫܢܝ ܚܝܘܗܝ ܒܟܢܫܬܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܦܢ ܕܐܬܡܠܝ
ܒܟܠܗ ܚܝܘܗܝ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܓܝܢܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܐܫܬܠܝܘ ܚܝ̈ܘܗܝ
ܒܟܠܗ ܠܫܒܝܠܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܢܘܗܪܢܝܬܐ܀

10. ܐܘ ܠܫܒܝܠܐ ܡܣܬܒܪܬܐ ܡܟܬܒܬܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ܆ ܕܡܢܝܩ ܘܡܫܦܩ
ܘܡܦܪܝܩ ܠܟܠ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܠܟܠ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܝܠܐ܆ ܗܘ
ܕܐܬܝܠܝܬ ܠܐܪܙ ܕܙܘܥ ܢܦܫܐ ܕܢܦܫ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ.
ܘܠܐ ܡܠܘܐܢ ܢܬܐܒܝܫ ܕܟܠܗ ܫܒܝܐ ܕܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܢܗܘܐ
ܡܬܢܚܬ. ܐܘ ܢܬܒܝܫ ܒܗܘܢ ܕܦܪܫ ܠܡܫܘܚܬܐ ܢܚܘܬܗ܆
ܘܠܐ ܡܬܒܝܫ ܕܐܘܠ ܢܬܠܐ܆ ܒܟܠ ܐܒܝܗܘܢ ܛܒܝܢ ܠܗ܆
ܘܬܡܢ ܐܗܠܐ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܦܬܟܪܢ ܠܗ. ܘܒܝܢ ܦܪܘܩܗܘܢ
ܕܟܠܗܘܢ܆ ܢܗܠ ܠܗ ܫܒܩ ܢܘܪܐ܆ ܡܫܬܛܚܝܢ ܒܟܢܐ
ܕܟܬܒ̈ܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ܀

11. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܐ ܐܦ ܡܫܬܪܐ ܫܬܐܐ ܒ ܒܝܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܐܬܠܗܘܢ܆ ܡܐ
ܕܦܫܡܠܝܢ ܡܢ ܕܘܟܬܗܘܢ܆ ܡܬܪܘܡ ܗܘܝܘ ܠܚܝܪܐ. ܘܟܠ
ܕܢܦܫ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܘ ܡܬܒܛܠ ܫܒܩܘܗܝ܆ ܐܘ ܠܐ ܠܒܝܒܠ
ܩܝܠ ܡܛܠ ܐܟܘܪܘܬܗ܆ ܒܟܠ ܒܠܩܗܘܢ ܛܒܝܢ ܠܗ܆
ܘܒܫܗܘܢ ܡܦܠܚܝܢ ܠܗ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܕܡܛܝܒ ܠܗܘܢ ܪܡܙܐ
ܦܘܢܝܗܘܢ܀

12. Perhaps you will say: "What must I do, I who am deprived of fellowship such as this whose members go towards high places by means of the incentives effected by their various bands?" Listen to what my own poverty tells you which needs only a morsel of solicited bread. Because you say: "Here I am on the shore of the sea waiting in case someone come to me who is capable of navigating this, and also I will settle in his boat and he will cast me into the depth of the sea and will teach me how to fish in the sea, which nourishes those who attain the skill. And no longer will I be sustained by crusts of bread that do not satisfy those who beg for it."
13. But it is not at all like this! Those who are standing on the shore of the sea and seek to make a catch such as this while standing on the outside, they let down their nets to the sea that from it they might draw up food for their livelihood because they are not expert in negotiating the crests of the waves. While constantly longing for nourishment such as this, day by day they acquire an increase of love; and when Jesus our God sees them so exhausted, He will go out to them from the bosom of his Father and by means of his sign, gather the dispersed into one unity.[10] He will gather the amazing catch of fish and will command the intellect, <like> Peter, to lift it up.[11] And when the band of those staying on your ship will have eaten of it, the eyes of their heart[12] will be opened and they will recognize Him[13] and when they have been doubly instructed, they will be persuaded that He never left their boat, but He was in it, sleeping[14] and hidden.

[10] cf. Matt. 24:30; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16.
[11] cf. Jn. 21:11.
[12] cf. Eph. 1:18.
[13] cf. Lk. 24:31.
[14] cf. Matt. 8:24.

12. ܘܒܬܪ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܡܛܠ ܐ̱ܚܪܝܢ܆ ܕܡܢ ܣܒܪܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܐ ܠܘܩܒܠ ܐܢܐ܆ ܗܘ ܕܝܕܥ ܠܗ ܠܐܬܪܘܬܐ ܪ̈ܡܐ ܡܟܝܟܐ܇ ܥܡ ܠܘܩ̈ܒܠܐ ܦܟܝ̈ܪܝܢ ܒܫܒ̈ܝܠܐ ܡܥܠ̈ܝܬܐ. ܢܗܘܐ ܐܦ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܣܝܡܬ̇ ܥܠܝ ܡܢܐ ܚܕܪܐ ܘܐ̱ܡܪ ܥܡܝ. ܡܛܠܠ ܕܐ̱ܡܪ ܐܢܬ ܕܗܘܐ ܥܠܝ ܫܦܝ̈ܪ ܡܢܐ ܦܐܡ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܫܦܠܐ ܐܢܐ. ܕܕܥܡܐ ܒܐܬܐ ܒܘܐܬ ܚܕ ܡܕܡ ܒܫܦܝܪܘܬܐ ܗܘܐ܆ ܘܒܐܥܩܬܗ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܐܬܬܘܐܒ܆ ܘܡܟܘܥܒ ܡܢܐ ܕܒܝܬܝ܆ ܘܐܬܥܩܬ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܕܒܢܡܐ ܡܬܪܓܫܐ ܠܒܝܬܗ܆ ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܡܪ̈ܝܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܩ̈ܒܠܝܢ ܠܚܕܘ̈ܪܝܗܘܢ ܐܬܐ̱ܪܫܐ܀

13. ܠܐ ܐܬܠܝܗ ܗܘܐ ܒܘܟܠܐܬܐ. ܕܐܝܟܢ ܕܥܠܠ ܫܦܪ ܡܢܐ ܦܩܝܢ܆ ܘܪܒܐ ܕܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܐ ܚܟܝܡ ܕܝܘܕܘܢ܆ ܟܕ ܦܩܝܢ ܡܢ ܥܒܪ ܘܥܡܗ ܡܪ̈ܕܝܬܗܘܢ ܡܦܩܪܝܢ܆ ܕܡܢܗ ܦܪܘܢܐ ܕܚܢܝ̈ܗܘܢ ܢܛܦܘܢ܆ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܡܦܫܝܢ ܒܡܪܕܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܠ ܚܙ̈ܝ ܠܘܩ̈ܒܠܐ. ܘܟܕ ܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܒܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܐܬܪܫܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܐ܆ ܢܘܡ ܡܢ ܢܘܡ ܦܩܝܢ ܚܟܝܡܘ ܐܘܫܦܐ ܕܪܚܡܬܐ܆ ܘܣܒܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܦܘܫ ܠܠܗܘܢ ܕܗܘܒܐ ܡܬܬܪܦܝܢ. ܢܦܘܩ ܡܢ ܒܘܟܗ ܕܐܟܘܗܝ ܒܘܐܬܗܘܢ܆ ܘܟܕ ܪܡܙܗ ܡܟܝܟ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܡܪ̈ܕܐ ܚܢܝܐ ܣܒܘܗ܆ ܘܟܕ ܙܕܩܐ ܗܘ ܐܡܝܢܐ ܢܟܦܘ܆ ܘܟܗܘܢܐ ܦܬܪܘܫ ܠܦܫܡܘܬܗ ܢܫܡܘܕ. ܘܟܕ ܡܢܗ ܬܐܘܟܒ ܫܝܟܠܬܐ ܕܚܡܪ̈ܝ ܠܠܦܝ܆ ܢܬܦܬ̈ܝ ܚܢ̈ܝܢ ܠܟܗܘܢ ܘܫܬܐܟܠܘܝܗܝ. ܘܟܕ ܒܫܝܠܬܐ ܢܬܢܟܡܘܢ܆ ܢܘܗܘܢ ܡܦܫܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܬܘܡ ܚܝܠ ܡܢ ܠܠܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܒܗ ܟܕ ܒܗ ܕܡܢܝ ܘܡܬܪܫܐ܀

14. Therefore everyone who is diligent awakens Him every day to rebuke the waves of the sea into silence, and by the breath of his Holy Spirit, to bring his boat unharmed with all that is in it to the haven and rest for all. To Him with his Father and the Holy Spirit, one power accomplishing and perfecting all by his complete perfection,[15] be praise with resounding voices from all the perfected ones of the choirs above with the assemblies below! To Him who unites these with those in one indivisible union with Him, be praise with resounding voices, new praise with the stirrings of an incessant silence, in all the worlds which have been and which are, forever and ever. Amen.
15. Do not blame me for not coming to you: I am a servant who does not have the power for what he desires. But when I am bound, I am free and when I am free, I am bound with shackles. When I wish to flee from myself, I am not able to go out from myself. And when I struggle to come to myself, I am not able to approach myself! Night and day I am felled by these uncertainties and there is no rest for me. What am I to do? I am not able to find myself nor am I able to flee from myself.
16. Let us make tearful supplication that in being bound by the fetters which lay hold of everything, I be fastened indissolubly above the world and that these ties might loosen me from myself and from everything by binding me to themselves in mercy without my merit, ties which have bound all the Powers on High with a love such as this. May He who holds all, the Father of all, grant to all of us and to all who desire Him, to be with Him in a total resemblance of the Powers, here below as in the life beyond. To Him be glory, forever and ever. Amen.

[15] Complete perfection (*šumlâyâ gmîrâ*).

14. ܡܕܡ ܟܠ ܕܢܗܘ ܦܘܩܕܢܐ. ܒܟܠܘܡ ܡܥܒܪ ܠܗ܆ ܠܡܬܠܐ
ܒܥܠܬ ܫܡܐ ܕܢܫܬܡܗ. ܘܟܕ ܢܫܟܐ ܕܪܘܚܐ ܕܠܗ ܡܕܝܢܐ܆
ܠܡܬܐܒܐ ܘܢܘܚܐ ܕܟܠ܆ ܠܐܠܗܘܗ ܠܘܬ ܟܠ ܕܒܗ ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܦܟ
ܢܦܫܗ. ܕܠܗ ܠܘܬ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܘܪܘܚ ܩܘܕܫܐ܆ ܚܕ ܐܢܫܐ ܒܥܘܕܪܐ
ܘܡܦܩܕܢܘܬܐ ܕܟܠ ܒܡܘܡܢܘܬܗ ܒܥܕܪܐ܆ ܡܢ ܕܒܗܘܢ
ܡܬܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܘܕܟܠܗ ܠܘܬ ܒܢܘܩܕܐ ܕܟܠܢܫ܆ ܡܢܚܕܐ
ܕܗܘܟܢ ܠܘܬ ܗܘܟܢ ܟܢܫܐ ܢܝܚܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܪܢܣܢܘܬܐ ܕܒܡܕܗ܆
ܠܡܚܘܝܬܐ ܒܩܠܐ ܕܒܢܝ ܣܘܟܠܐ ܢܝܚܬܐ ܒܪܘܒܝ ܫܟܝܢܐ ܠܐ
ܡܟܘܢܐ. ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܗܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܘܕܗܘܐ ܠܥܠܡ ܠܥܠܡܝܢ
ܐܡܝܢ܀

15. ܘܠܐ ܚܟܝܡܐ ܡܬܬܠܝܢ ܠܗܠܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܬܕܒܠ. ܕܟܕܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܕܗܘ
ܘܚܕܐ ܠܐ ܦܚܠܝܢ ܠܗ. ܘܟܕ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܕܢܐ ܐܢܐ܆ ܘܟܕ ܕܢܐ ܐܢܐ܆
ܒܣܦܪܝܘܬܐ ܦܬܪ ܐܢܐ. ܘܟܕ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܝ ܪܒܐ ܐܢܐ ܘܐܟܪܘܗ܆ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܝ
ܠܒܣܡ ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚ ܐܢܐ. ܘܟܕ ܡܬܒܠܗ ܐܢܐ ܕܠܗܠܝܢ ܐܢܬ܆
ܘܐܡܪܘܢ ܠܗܠܝܢ ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚ ܐܢܐ. ܘܒܗܘܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ ܠܟܠܝܐ
ܘܐܬܡܗܐ ܪܒܐ ܐܢܐ ܘܡܬܡܠܐܘܗ ܠܟܠܗ ܠܟ. ܘܡܢܐ ܐܟܒܪ ܕܐܢܐ
ܠܟ ܘܐܡܚܝ ܠܐ ܡܟܪܐ ܐܢܐ܆ ܘܐܬܐܪܝܡ ܡܢܝ ܠܐ ܦܣܩ ܐܢܐ܀

16. ܐܬܦܣܩ ܠܡܢܝ ܒܪܘܚܐ܆ ܕܐܬܦܪܣܘܗܝ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܐܝܕܝܗ ܟܠ ܟܠܐ.
ܐܬܝܘܗ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܪܝܢܝܢ ܠܟܠ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܡܐ. ܘܗܘܝܘ ܠܟ ܡܢܝ
ܘܡܢ ܟܠ ܢܫܪܘܢ܆ ܘܠܗܘܢ ܒܪܝܫܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܡܢ ܡܫܬܘܕܝ
ܢܚܝܘܢ. ܗܢܘܢ ܕܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܪܘܚܐ ܒܗܘܒܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܝܐ
ܕܗܪܘ ܐܢܘܢ. ܕܠܟܠܟ ܠܘܬ ܟܠ ܘܐܬܬܝܢ ܠܗ܆ ܕܠܟܠ ܐܚܕ ܟܠ
ܐܚܐ ܕܟܠ܆ ܕܒܟܠܗ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܗܪܟܐ ܐܦ ܠܐܡܢ ܠܒܠܗ
ܢܗܘܐ. ܕܠܗ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܥܠܡ ܠܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ܀

Letter 41

1. If then you ask, my brother, why I do not narrate these hidden mysteries in your presence for your consolation when you come to me, know that this does not depend on me. For I am like a young child who while he is within his father's house, all kinds of precious things are put before him for his pleasure and joy: here, all sorts of sweet foods; there, all sorts of fine things, gold and silver, pearls and precious stones. And on all sides there is everything which pleases and delights and he enjoys and is glad for them.
2. But when he goes out to the children, his friends, his father fills his pocket with ordinary fruits and sends him out to divert himself with his friends and to refresh them. He does not provide him with special things, lest being young he lose his treasure.. And if he resists and begs on account of his innocence, his father who knows what is advantageous, closes the door to the treasures lest he see them at such times.
3. Now you see my foolishness!

ܕܐܬܪ̈ܥܝܢ ܚܕܐ.

1. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܚܝ܆ ܕܒܠܥܕܝܟ ܠܐ ܐ̇ܬܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܬܪ̈ܬܐ ܓܒ̈ܝܐ
ܡܕܡܝܢ ܠܟܘܢܫܝܢ ܒܝ ܕܐܬܬ ܠܟܘܬܟ. ܕܟܕ ܠܟܝ ܕܠܟܘ ܕܠܟܝ
ܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܗܘܐ. ܕܟܠ ܐܢܐ ܓܒܪ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܫܒܪܐ. ܕܒܝ ܐܠܗܘܬܟ
ܠܓܒܗ ܒܝܬ ܐܒܘܗܝ܆ ܫܒܩܬ ܠܗ ܡܕܡܘܗܝ ܒܠܠ ܕ̈ܒܥܝ
ܡܫܝܚܐ܆ ܠܟܘܫܡܫܗ ܘܠܢܦܘܫܗ. ܗܪܟܐ ܒܠܠ ܡܐܩܒܠ ܗܢܝܐ.
ܐܡܪ ܒܠܠ ܕ̈ܒܥܝ ܦܫܝܛܐ. ܕܗܒܐ ܘܫܐܡܐ ܘܡ̈ܢܝܓܝܐܬܐ ܘܩ̈ܠܝܠܐ
ܛܒ̈ܬܐ. ܘܡܢ ܒܠܠ ܓܒ̈ܝܢ ܕܡܬܩܫܢ ܘܡܢ̈ܝܢ܆
ܘܒܗܠܝܢ ܟܫܡ ܘܢܕܐ܀

2. ܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܫܡ ܠܟܘܬ ܛܒ̈ܬܐ ܚܒܪ̈ܘܗܝ܆ ܒܠܐ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܠܗܘܠܗ
ܐܩ̈ܒܠܐ ܫܒܝܩܐ ܘܦܪ̈ܘܗ. ܕܒܗܘܢ ܢܐܦܪܓܐ ܘܢܫܡܫܘܢ ܠܟܠܐ
ܕܚܒܪ̈ܘܗܝ. ܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܪܘܕ ܠܗ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܠܬ̈ܝܢ܆ ܕܠܐ ܢܘܒܝ
ܫܩ̈ܠܬܗ ܡܛܠܠ ܫܒܪ̈ܘܬܗ. ܘܐܦ ܡܬܚܪܐ ܘܦܠܠ ܡܛܠܠ
ܦܫܝܛܘܬܗ܆ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܐܝܟ ܢܝܚܐ ܕܡܒܕܪܐ܆ ܐ̇ܝܟ ܠܐܪܒܐ ܒܐܪ̈ܒܥ
ܫܩ̈ܠܬܐ܆ ܡܢ ܕܚܕܐ ܐܢ̈ܬ ܒܪ̈ܟܒܐ ܕܕܐܝܟ ܗܠܝܢ܀

3. ܗܢܝ ܕܟܠ ܓܒܪܬܐ ܕܠܟܝ ܦܩܕܬܐ܀

LETTER 42

[To a brother who was pursued by the
creditors of his natural father]

1. To anyone who requires this debt from you say: "If I have a father in the world, I also possess the property he leaves, land and things, a house and vines. But if these things of his are not mine, neither am I his son. And if I have gone out from the world, my Father is Christ. He has requited my debt with his blood. And I do not have a father who is a debtor, whose debt I must repay to his fellow debtors." Do not give to those in the world and do not receive from the world so as not to become a son of the world.
2. As our Father has told me to teach you, brother, so I have taught you.

Prayer[1]

1. O Christ, ocean of our pardon, allow this impurity with which I am clothed to be cleansed in You and may I shine in the garment of your holy light and be covered with the cloud[2] of your hidden glory and secret mysteries. May those things which might turn me from the sight of your beauty not be visible to me. May the wonder of your glory captivate me always, my Lord, and may my mind not be able to accept worldly impulses. Let nothing, my Lord, be able to separate me from your love, but may the desire to see your face torment me always. Amen.

[1] For other Prayers from the Syriac mystical tradiditon, see Brock, *Syriac Fathers*, 340–364. See also J. Sanders, "Un manuel de prières populaire de l'église syrienne," *Le Muséon* 90 (1977): 81–102.

[2] cf. Ex. 20.21.

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ܕܐܬܒܥܝ ܘܐܬܪܬܝ: ܠܡܘܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܚܕ ܕܐܬܚܝܒ ܗܘܘ ܠܗܘ ܡܪ̈ܝ
ܢܘܚܡܬܐ ܕܐܒܘܗܝ ܦܓܪܢܝܐ.

1. ܠܟܠܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܠܟܝ ܢܘܚܡܬܐ ܗܘܐ ܐܡܪ ܠܗܘ. ܠܝ ܐܒܐ ܠܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܝܠܐ ܠܟܝ: ܐܦ ܬܪ̈ܘܬܗ ܩܕܡ ܐܝܟ. ܐܘܪܚܐ ܘܙܒܢܬܐ. ܘܠܚܝܬܐ ܘܡܬܪ̈ܬܐ. ܘܠܝ ܗܘܠܟ ܕܠܟܘ ܠܟܠܐ ܠܟܝ: ܐܦܠܐ ܠܪܘܗ ܐܝܠܟ. ܘܠܝ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܬܐ ܢܦܫܐ: ܐܒܐ ܕܠܟܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܗܘ. ܗܘ ܕܦܪܩܟ ܢܘܚܡܬܐ ܕܠܟܝ ܒܕܡܗ. ܘܟܠܗ ܠܟܝ ܐܒܐ ܢܣܒܐ: ܕܢܘܚܡܬܗ ܐܦܪܘܩ ܠܚܝ̈ܒܐ ܚܛܝܬܗ. ܘܠܐ ܬܬܠܐ ܠܟܠܢܫܝܚܐ: ܘܠܐ ܬܬܦܩ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܬܐ. ܕܠܐ ܬܗܘܐ ܠܪ ܠܟܠܬܐ܀
2. ܐܡܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܟܝ ܐܒܘܢ ܕܟܠܟ ܠܐܚܘܝ. ܐܠܦܬܝ܀

ܨܠܘܬܐ.

1. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܪܝܐ ܕܚܘܒܫܝ: ܗܒܠܝ ܕܡܢ ܬܬܦܫܛ ܙܥܘܪܘܬܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܠܒܫܬ ܐܢܐ. ܘܐܙܕܗܪܬ ܠܟܠܒܫܬ ܢܗܘܪܝ ܡܕܡܐ. ܘܠܒܪܬܟܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܝ ܫܠܡܢܐ ܘܠܒܝܫ ܙܪ̈ܝܐ ܐܬܐܫܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܢܬܬܪܝܡ ܠܟܝ ܗܠܟܝ ܕܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܡܫܦܪܝ ܢܠܦ ܠܟܝ. ܢܒܟܝܢ ܡܪܝ ܠܗܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܝ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ: ܘܠܐ ܢܒܟܝ ܪ̈ܟܝܢܝ ܠܡܪܟܘ ܙܩܝ̈ܦܐ ܠܟܫܝܚܐ. ܠܐ ܡܪܝ ܢܒܟܝ ܡܕܡ ܕܡܢ ܫܘܒܚܝ ܢܦܪܫܝ. ܐܠܐ ܦܓܪܐ ܕܒܝ ܠܦܫܝܢ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ: ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܦܪܘܩܝ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 43

[On repentance[1] and the hope and exhortation of sinners]

1. If, then, you ask, my brother, how repentance is able to renew a person who is decayed and decomposed by sin, remember and consider his first creation, from what and in what manner, that is, from something mean and foul—in a dark and narrow womb—and how the grace of our God put together this foul matter in the dark womb with all its complex structure and brought it forth to the light of this world, formed and pure and beautiful and loveable. So also it is for the one who because of Satan's influence has corrupted his purity from holy baptism and is defiled and becomes abominable again by all the impure ulcers of sin: by means of his birth from the sad and dark womb of repentance, he goes forth to the light of the spiritual world, the symbol of which he received in baptism.

[1] Repentance (*tyâbûtâ*) see Beulay, ES, 55–60; see John's Discourse 19, "Admonitions and Counsels on Holy Repentance," Vat. 124, 346a–348a. In Jewish Midrashic material, some beautiful passages can be found on repentance. It is considered to be one of the seven things created before the creation of the world. See "The power of Repentance" in *Pirke Rabbi Eliezer*, trans. G. Friedlander (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1981), 337–344. (PRE is a 9th cent. redaction, most of the material belonging to an earlier period). See also Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979), 462–471. Gershom Scholem quotes a Babylonian Gaon (8th cent.) linking the path of repentance with the "ecstatic progress through the seven heavens" leading to the throne of glory. See G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, 78. Several scholars (P. Alexander, S. P. Brock, A. Golitzen, T. Kronholm, and N. Sed, among others) have in fact noted the presence of Jewish materials among the writings of the East Syriac tradition.

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ܕܐܬܦܪܥ ܘܐܠܦܐ܆ ܥܠ ܐܝܟܘܬܐ ܘܫܘܪܐ ܘܥܘܒܕܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ.

1. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܚܝ܆ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܠܐܝܟܘܬܐ ܡܡܟܝܟܐ ܡܢܝܚܬܐ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܕܐܬܡܟܟ ܘܐܬܐܝܟܠ ܒܫܝܢܬܐ. ܓܒܪ ܘܝܕܥ ܠܐܘܡܢܘ ܡܕܡܝܐ܆ ܕܡܢ ܡܢܐ ܘܐܝܟܢ. ܗܘܘ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܡܕܡ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܘܦܫܝܩܐ. ܘܒܥܪܝܬܐ ܚܫܘܒܬܐ ܘܠܒܝܒܬܐ. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܪܥܒܐ ܛܝܒܘܬܗ ܕܠܐܘܗܝ ܠܡܟܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܫܪܝܐ ܒܥܪܝܬܐ ܚܫܘܒܬܐ܆ ܒܒܥܐ ܠܘܬܗ ܕܪܘܚܢܗ܆ ܘܐܦܩܬܗ ܠܗܘܢܘܗܝ ܕܒܠܒܐ ܗܢܐ܆ ܒܝ ܡܪܟܠܡ ܘܕܓܠ ܘܦܠܦܪ ܘܪܝܫ. ܗܟܢܐ ܐܦ ܗܘ ܕܐܝܟܠ ܕܒܘܬܗ ܕܡܢ ܒܥܒܪܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܒܡܥܒܪܢܘܬܗ ܕܫܦܝܐ܆ ܘܫܪܐ ܘܐܬܝܕ ܒܒܠܒܘܗܝ ܡܟܝܟܐ ܠܦܬܐ ܕܢܣܒܬܐ܆ ܠܘܬ ܒܪ ܡܘܠܕܗ ܕܡܢ ܒܘܒܗ ܒܡܒܪܐ ܘܚܡܘܬܐ ܕܐܝܟܘܬܐ܆ ܢܦܩ ܠܘܬܗ ܕܒܠܒܐ ܕܪܘܚ ܕܢܫܒ ܙܐܪܗ ܒܒܦܪܐ܀

2. For example, this ugly seed, if it be cast into pure, spacious, and luminous earth, and does not go into the dark and grievous womb: it will be useless and without likeness to what produced it. So also he who is disfigured and corrupted by sin, if he does not enter the dark, chastening, and painful womb of repentance, will remain loathsome and without likeness to Him who by holy baptism is his Progenitor. And just as corporeal Adam by Eve begets sons in his resemblance for the corporeal world, so Christ, Father of the spiritual world, by repentance and baptism brings forth sons in his image for his spiritual world. And just as the newborn when he goes out from the darkness of Eve's womb, immediately sees the light of Adam's world; so also when the sons of God go out from the dark womb of repentance, the glorious light of the new world shines before them as it proclaims to them the principle of their life while saying: Repent, the kingdom of heaven is near![2]
3. If repentance is close by, show us, Father, how we can find it. *It is at the door*,[3] but *the door is narrow and constraining*.[4] However, all who endure its dark and gloomy severity and go through it, immediately encounter the kingdom of light and take delight. Again, this is the narrow door to enter life: but your Kingdom, Our Lord, in which place is it found?—*It is within you*[5] and its door is repentance.
4. Repentance restores the life of baptism through absolution. Even as worthless matter in a dark womb acquires the image of the person of Adam, so a person defiled and made foul by sin: if you bring him into the fiery furnace of repentance, he is cleansed and made pure and shines. He becomes beautiful and fragrant and acquires by the grace renewing him the image of the beauty of Christ, the splendor of the Father.[6] Repentance is the mother of life:[7] blessed is he who is born of her, because he will die no more.[8]

[2] Matt. 3:2; 4:17.
[3] Matt. 24:33.
[4] Matt. 7:14; Lk. 13:24.
[5] Lk. 17:21.
[6] Heb. 1:3.
[7] cf. Gen. 3:20. See Isaac of Nineveh, Homily 65 in Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus*, 443.
[8] cf. Rom. 6:9; Jn. 11:26; 6:50.

2. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܪܥܐ ܗܕܐ ܚܫܝܐ ܐܝܬܘܗ̇ ܕܡܩܒܠܐ ܠܙܪܥܐ ܕܛܒܬܐ ܘܪܘܚܢܝܬܐ
ܘܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ܂ ܘܠܐ ܫܩܠܐ ܠܙܪܥܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܘܡܫܚܠܦܘܬܐ܂ ܗܕܐ ܕܠܐ
ܚܣܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܒܘܪܬܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢܗ܂ ܗܘܝܐ ܐܦ ܗܕܐ ܕܐܫܬܠܚ ܘܫܒܩ
ܒܫܠܝܬܐ܂ ܐܝܬܘܗ̇ ܕܠܐ ܫܩܠܐ ܠܡܠܬܗ ܕܢܡܘܣܐ ܘܪܘܩܐ ܘܡܬܐܣܝܢܐ
ܕܐܢܫܘܬܐ܂ ܗܕܐ ܫܒܝܪܐ ܘܠܐ ܕܒܘܪܬܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢܗ ܕܡܢ ܚܦܪܐ ܗܕܐ
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ܕܝܢܘܬܗ ܠܥܠܡܗ ܦܐܪ̈ܐ܂ ܗܘܝܐ ܡܗܝܡܢܐ ܐܦܐ ܕܒܥܠܡܐ
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ܘܒܥܠܡܐ ܚܕܬܐ ܒܐܦ̈ܝܗܘܢ. ܐܝܟ ܕܙܕܝܩܐ ܕܢܚܘܗܝ ܦܩܕ ܠܗܘܢ
ܒܝ ܐܡܪ. ܕܬܐܬܐ ܡܢܟ ܠܗ̇ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ܀

3. ܘܐܝܟ ܡܫܒܚܐ ܠܗ̇ ܐܝܬܘܗ̇ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܢ܂ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܟ. ܟܠܗ̇ ܐܪܥܐ
ܐܠܗܝܐ. ܒܪܡ ܦܠܓܝ ܗܘ ܐܪܥܐ ܘܐܠܗܝ. ܘܟܠܗ ܕܡܫܒܚܝܢ
ܒܫܡܘܬܗ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܘܡܒܪܟܬܐ ܘܢܩܫ ܒܗ܂ ܕܚܒܪܐ ܦܬܘܪ
ܠܡܫܒܚܘܬܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܘܡܬܚܫܚܝܢ. ܠܘܬ ܗܕܗ ܐܪܥܐ ܐܠܗܝܐ ܠܡܫܟܠܠ
ܠܚܝ̈ܐ. ܘܡܫܒܚܘܬܝ ܡܢ ܒܐܝܕܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܡܫܠܡܢܐ. ܠܟܠܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ
ܗܘ. ܘܠܐܪܥܗ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ܀

4. ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܚܝ̈ܐ ܕܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ. ܐܝܟܢܐ
ܕܡܟܠܬܐ ܕܒܝܫܬܐ ܠܪܥܝܢܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܦܐܝܐ ܕܒܘܠܐ ܡܘܬܒܗ ܕܐܝܟ܂
ܗܘܝܐ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܠܡܩܠܐ ܚܝܠ ܒܫܠܝܬܐ܂ ܐܝܬܘܗ̇ ܕܐܬܟܠܬܗܘܢ ܠܒܘܪܐ
ܙܐܝܠܐ ܕܐܢܫܘܬܐ܂ ܡܬܢܒܪܝܢ ܘܒܟܠ ܘܡܕܒܪܢܐ. ܘܣܝܡ ܘܚܫܚܡ ܘܦܐܠ
ܒܫܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܬܢܒܪܝܢܘܬܗ܂ ܕܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܗ ܘܡܗܝܡܢܐ ܙܕܝܩܐ ܕܐܝܟ.
ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܗܝ ܕܚܝ̈ܐ. ܘܫܘܒܚܗ ܠܟܢ ܕܡܢܗ̇ ܡܬܒܥܐ ܕܠܐ
ܠܘܬ ܦܬܐ܀

5. However, as Christ preaches repentance to his own, likewise Satan alienates from this repentance those who obey him and he steeps their hearts in debauchery and amusement. But just as repentance is a remedy of life for those who are dead in sin, so it is also a poison which kills the passions and sin, and is a great torture for Satan, her adversary. For the captives he captures in his cruelty, she saves and frees. She destroys his labor of years in an instant. The slaves who voluntarily pledge him their freedom, repentance restores them to their heritage and torments their oppressor. The seed of thorns which Satan sowed in our land[9] and carefully made to grow for many years: in one day repentance burns and purifies the field that it might yield fruits a hundredfold[10] from the seed of the Plowman who is Christ.
6. The ramparts which Satan took a long time to build to enclose the captives bound in darkness: for a brief moment repentance breathes on them and they are cast down and *the light shines out on the face of those who sit in darkness*.[11] Their chains are broken and their adversities are changed into joy and their tears into great rejoicing. He who had bound them is himself bound by the reins of darkness and delivered by them to the scourgers. Repentance destroys all his works, and all the pains he caused the servants who are not his, she heals and restores. All whom he has killed she resuscitates, all his traps she shatters, and all his snares she cuts to bits.
7. Repentance smoothes the road before those who love her so that they proceed without stumbling on the way which Christ has given. She makes fornicators virgins. She purifies the fiery ones who have become tarnished. She leads them from the taverns to the desert for the work of angels, but the lucid ones who disregarded her, she has renounced them and they have gone down into the devouring pit. She goes into the house of harlots and takes the fornicators and from her wings she begets them as virgins of Christ. She restores the apostolate to traitors, but the apostles who laid it aside have clothed themselves in darkness. She herself is the garment of the penitent and those who put it on she clothes with the glory of Jesus, the true Light.[12]

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[9] cf. Matt. 13:25.

[10] Mk. 4:8.

[11] Matt. 4:16; Lk. 1:79; Is. 9:2; 42:7, 16; Acts 26:8.

[12] Jn. 1:9.

5. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܡܟܪܙ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܠܟܠܗܝܢ ܕܒܠܗ. ܗܟܢܐ ܫܠܝܚܐ
ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܗܘܢ ܡܟܪܙܐ ܡܢ ܗܪܟܐ. ܘܒܐܬܘܬܐ ܘܒܚܝܠܐ ܬܡܢ
ܠܒܢܝܗܘܢ. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܟܠܗ ܗܝ ܕܒܢܝܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܫܠܝܚܘܬܐ.
ܗܟܢܐ ܗܘ ܟܕ ܗܘ ܟܠܗ ܦܬܘܠܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܒܫܠܝܚܘܬܐ. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܟܠ
ܠܫܠܝܚܐ ܕܠܡܫܘܠܡܗ. ܡܛܠ ܕܟܠ ܒܫܪܝܪܘܬܗ ܗܘ ܦܪܝܫ
ܘܡܫܪܪܐ. ܠܡܟܠܗ ܕܩܢܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܡܟܠ ܦܘܟܪܐ ܓܒܪܐ ܕܡܫܡܠܝܘ ܠܗ
ܒܐܪܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܪܘܚܗܘܢ. ܗܘ ܦܩܝܕܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܒܪܢܬܗܘܢ
ܘܡܕܢܚܐ ܠܡܦܠܚܢܝܗܘܢ. ܪܘܚ ܒܩܘܠܐ ܕܪܘܚ ܒܐܡܪܝܢ ܘܪܟܒ
ܢܦܝܫܬܐ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܕܩܢܝܐ. ܒܗܘܡܐ ܚܕ ܦܘܩܕܐ. ܘܡܕܒܪܢܐ ܠܗ
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6. ܣܗܕܐ ܕܓܠܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܣܓܝܐܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܫܬܪܝ ܡܛܠ
ܒܣܘܓܐܐ. ܒܪܡܐ ܕܚܘܪܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܘܡܫܬܟܚܝܢ. ܘܕܢܚ ܢܘܗܪܐ
ܒܐܦܝ ܢܠܒܫ ܒܣܘܓܐܐ. ܘܐܫܬܘܕܝܘܢ ܡܠܦܫܝܢ. ܘܒܩܠܗܘܢ
ܡܡܠܠܢܝܢ ܠܚܕܘܬܐ. ܘܕܟܝܢܘܢ ܠܪܘܚܐ. ܘܐܫܬܘܕܝܘܢ ܡܬܐܡܪ
ܒܪܘܚ ܣܘܓܐܐ. ܘܡܫܬܠܡܝܢ ܒܐܝܕܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܝܢܐ. ܟܠ
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ܢܗܘܘܢ. ܗܘ ܟܕ ܐܝܬ ܒܚܕܐ. ܘܗܘ ܩܪܝܒ ܢܗܪܐ ܘܐܡܝܢ.
ܗܘ ܡܢ ܒܟܠ ܦܬܓܡܐ ܠܡܕܒܪܐ ܕܟܪܐ ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘ ܡܠܐܟܐ. ܘܗܘܢܐ
ܕܐܒܫܘ ܒܗ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܐܝܟ ܘܢܣܒܗ ܠܡܫܘܠܠ ܟܠܟܠܐ. ܗܘ
ܟܠܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܘܟܪܐ ܠܡܐܢܐ. ܘܡܢܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܒܩܫܝܗ
ܒܡܐܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܗܘ ܠܡܫܩܠܡܢܐ ܦܩܝܕܐ ܡܟܢܫܘܬܐ.
ܘܡܟܢܫܐ ܕܡܓܢܣܗ ܓܒܪܗ ܣܓܝܐܐ. ܗܘ ܗܘ ܠܟܠܡܗ ܕܐܝܬܐ.
ܘܡܠܟܩܫܝܗ ܡܟܠܡܐ ܠܡܫܘܚܠܗ ܕܡܘܬ. ܗܘ ܕܐܬܠܘܗܝ
ܢܗܘܐ ܕܡܙܪܐ܀

8. She leads people on the highways to the kingdom and from the hedges she brings them into the banquet.[13] From dark beings she forms luminous ones and the blind she makes to see. She uproots the tree whose fruits are a deadly potion and will plant the Tree of Life in our paradise.[14] She carries on her wings sweet spices of grace and perfume to those who are made foul by impurity, if they accept her. She stands at the door of the celestial Bridegroom and whoever passes by her, He himself goes to meet. In her hands are placed the nuptial crowns and whoever inclines before her she makes recline in the bridal chamber. Also in her hands the keys of the Kingdom are placed and whoever desires her and loves her, she makes a steward.
9. She is the mother[15] of the celestial eagles and all who are born of her she makes them sprout wings of fire and they fly with the spiritual beings on high. Everyone whose wings hunters have torn and who seeks shelter under her wings for a few days, receives flying wings from her, more fiery and swifter than the first ones.
10. She is the remedy of the celestial healer and whoever puts it on his hurt is healed immediately. She does not cut with a knife nor inflict cauteries. Her medicines are mixed with mercy and she bandages wounds with soft things. The deadly drug of amusement and licentiousness is in the hands of Satan, but the drug of life, repentance, is in the hands of Christ. Everyone who has drunk from the cup of the Slayer, let him draw near and drink the medicine of the Vivifier of all and he will live forever.
11. She enters the graves and visits the dead and anyone whom death has swallowed up and who has drawn near to her wings, she tears death open and he goes out from its belly. She sees the blind who weep each day at her gates and she draws them to show the light of joys. She sees the slain whom Satan has killed, and calling, she resurrects them in the anticipated resurrection.[16] She is the treasure of the sons of our Redeemer and in her are preserved the riches of their labor.

[13] cf. Lk. 14:23.

[14] cf. Gen. 2:9.

[15] In the Discourses, John refers to repentance as a mother: "Glory to thee, O Father of all, for giving us a new mother for a new birth, before the complete birth from thine own womb…she cleanses, purifies, beautifies, and cherishingly shelters under her wing those born of her…." See Discourse 19, Vat. 124, 348a.

[16] cf. Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12.

8. ܗܘ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܐܘܪܚܬܐ ܠܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ. ܘܡܢ ܟܠ ܡܫ̈ܬܠܝܐ
ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܥܠܐ. ܗܘ ܡܢ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܢܩܠܐ ܗܘܬ̈ܐ. ܘܠܡܫܡ̈ܫܢܐ
ܬܟܒܐ ܢܘܚܐ. ܗܘ ܬܟܪܐ ܐܝܠܢܐ ܕܦܐܪ̈ܘܗܝ ܛܒ ܡܢܗܝܢ. ܘܐܝܟ
ܚܝܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܒܦܪܕܝܣܐ. ܗܘ ܛܒܝܠܐ ܒܒܬ̈ܘܠܘܗܝ ܗܘ̈ܪܘܗܝ ܠܛܒܘܬܐ.
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ܒܐܪ̈ܝܗ ܫܒܝܚܝܢ ܡܠ̈ܟܝܢ ܡܫܠܡܘܬܐ. ܘܥܠ ܕܐܠܗܝܢ ܡܩܕܫܗ
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9. ܗܘ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܡܐ ܕܝܫܪܐ ܫܩܝܠܐ܆ ܘܥܠ ܕܐܝܟܢܗ ܡܢܗ ܐܘܚܕܢܐ
ܠܗܘܢ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܗܘܐ܆ ܘܟܡ ܪܘܚܐ ܦܪܝܫ ܠܡܪܘܡܐ. ܟܠ ܕܩܪܒܗ
ܒܥܡܘܕ ܕܒܪܐ܆ ܘܐܫܬܠܛ ܐܝܟܢ ܒܢܝܢܗ ܩܪܝܒܐ ܩܘܡܬܐ܆ ܒܫܡܟ
ܠܗ ܡܢܗ ܒܝܬܐ ܦܪܘܚܐ ܕܗܘܪܝܢ ܘܩܠܝܠܝܢ ܠܗܪ ܡܢ ܡܪܟܒܐ܀
10. ܗܘ ܗܘ ܒܪܥܐ ܕܐܫܝܐ ܫܡܝܢܐ܆ ܘܡܢ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܥܠ ܓܘܐ ܕܗ
ܐܝܟܢ ܒܪ ܫܡܠܘܗ. ܠܐ ܟܪܘܐ ܒܡܘܟܟܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܡܣܝܟܐ ܠܓܘܓܐ
ܒܩܘܡܐ. ܒܪܝܟܐ ܢܚܘܬܝܢ ܫܡܝܫܝܢ܆ ܘܒܪ̈ܚܡܐ ܟܪܘܟܐ
ܫܩܝܠܬܐ. ܫܡ ܡܠܬܐ܆ ܓܒܪܐ ܘܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܒܐܪ̈ܝܗ ܫܒܝܚܐ. ܘܫܡ ܚܝܐ܆
ܠܡܚܘܬܐ ܒܐܪ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܘܥܠ ܕܦܬܐ ܡܢܗ ܕܟܫܗ ܕܦܛܘܠܐ܆
ܕܡܪܘܒ ܕܡܬܐ ܫܡܗ ܕܡܐܬܐ ܥܠ ܘܐܝܟܐ ܕܠܐ ܫܘܒܩܢ܀
11. ܟܐܠܐ ܠܒܝܬ ܡܬܐ ܘܫܒܪܐ ܡܬܘܬܐ. ܘܥܠ ܕܟܠܒܗ ܡܘܬܐ
ܘܡܪ ܕܝܢ ܒܬܦܘܗ܆ ܦܪܐܬܗ ܠܡܘܬܐ ܘܢܦܩ ܡܢ ܒܪܫܗ. ܢܪܐܐ
ܠܗܘܢܐ ܕܟܬܒ ܒܠܐ ܗܘܡ ܒܥܠ ܠܐܘܪܚܗ܆ ܘܢܝܚܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ
ܠܗܘܪܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ. ܢܪܐܐ ܡܛܠܐ ܕܦܛܠܐ ܫܛܝܐ܆ ܘܦܪܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ
ܠܗܘܢ ܡܢܗܐ ܡܦܩܕܬܐ. ܟܝܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝ ܦܪܘܩ܆ ܘܒܗ
ܡܬܒܛܪ ܒܗܪܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢܗܘܢ܀

12. She is a sea washing anyone who is unclean and a fiery furnace purifying anyone who is tarnished. She is a fire consuming all the tares, and water causing holy seeds to grow. She is a garden delighting her associates and a desert terrifying all the rebels. She is the earth, making the sons of light to grow, and in her hands there is a basin for whoever is unclean. She is a wet-nurse of new-born babes, sons from on high, and she is the one who rears the heirs of Christ. She is a rampart protecting all within and a warrior returning anyone who is a captive.
13. She is a temple for impure peoples, and from her they receive the holiness for their crying "Holy." She is a house and a dwelling for those who are buffeted and she makes them heirs to the Kingdom. She is the treasury in which are all the treasures and anyone who knocks at her door receives his necessities from her.
14. She is a mother whose womb is not sterile and anyone who is barren and draws near to her receives beloved children from her. She is the portress who stands at the door of the Creator and if anyone has received sentence and comes near and petitions her, she goes and frees him. In her hands is placed a heavenly sprinkling and if the place which is lacking in rain takes refuge in her, she opens her hands and waters it. She follows the destroyer of the camp[17] and when they call out before her, she draws near and restrains him.
15. She accompanies all the angels and from those who love her she removes all the chastisements which have been prescribed. She stands at God's door and restores to her followers all good things which go out from Him. She is the advocate of wrongdoers and when they draw near to petition her she stands before them.

[17] 2 Kings 19.35.

12. ܡܛܠ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܟܠ ܕܐܬܡܠܝ ܘܗܘܐ ܕܐܝܠܐ ܦܪܫ ܟܠ
ܘܐܚܝܕ. ܗܘܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܩܘܡܝܐ ܟܠ ܐܬܪ̈ܘܬܐ. ܘܟܠܗ ܡܕܒܪܢ ܘܕܒܪܐ
ܡܬܬܠܐ. ܦܪܘܫܘܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܡܚܫܚ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ. ܘܝܗܒܐ ܡܫܡܪܝܐ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܘܕܐ. ܐܘܟܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܡܬܒܥܝܐ ܒܟܠ ܢܘܗܪܐ.
ܘܡܫܬܟܚܐ ܒܐܬܪܘܬܐ ܠܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܫܬܐܠ. ܡܝܬܘܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܕܒܟܠܐ
ܒܟܠ ܙܘܢܐ. ܘܡܬܒܥܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܢܛܘܪܘܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܝܕܥܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ
ܢܛܪ ܟܠ ܕܒܢܝܗ. ܘܡܬܒܠܬܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܟܠ ܕܒܥܠܡ܀
13. ܘܡܛܠ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܒܒܣܝܡܬܐ ܠܐ ܕܟܝܐ ܘܡܢܗ ܢܫܒܘܚ ܡܘܗܒܐ
ܠܫܘܪܝܗܘܢ. ܒܠܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܘܒܘܝܢܐ ܠܡܬܛܪ̈ܦܐ. ܘܗܘ
ܚܒܪܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܢܬܪܐ ܒܡܟܠܟܘܬܐ. ܚܙܝܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ
ܣܬܝܡܬܐ. ܘܟܠ ܕܢܦܫ ܒܐܬܪܘܬܗ ܡܢܗ ܢܫܒ ܣܘܝܡܘܬܗ܀
14. ܢܟܝܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܒܘܟܪܗ ܠܐ ܚܙܐ. ܘܟܠ ܕܟܦܪ ܘܡܪܒ ܕܝܢܗ
ܝܗܒ ܠܗ ܒܟܠܐ ܕܚܝܡܐ. ܐܘܟܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܦܫܛܐ ܒܐܘܪܚ
ܚܪܘܐ. ܘܟܠ ܕܦܫܩ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܚܙܪ ܕܝܠܐ ܘܡܪܒ ܐܦܝܫܘܗ
ܒܟܠܐ ܘܡܬܪܘܗ. ܒܐܬܪܘܬܗ ܫܝܡܝܢ ܕܫܝܫܐ ܕܡܫܝܐ. ܘܐܬܪܐ
ܕܫܟܝܢ ܠܗ ܡܛܪܐ ܘܐܝܟ ܒܗܘ ܚܘܫܐ. ܦܠܐܚܐ ܘܐܬܡܠܘܗܝ.
ܗܘ ܠܟܠܐ ܠܚܝܪ ܡܫܪܬܐ. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܚܙܘ ܡܝܬܘܗ ܡܬܒܥܐ
ܘܒܠܠܗ܀
15. ܗܘ ܠܟܠܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܠܐ. ܘܟܠ ܡܬܕܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ
ܡܚܒܪܐ ܡܢ ܕܢܝܚܘܬܗ. ܗܘ ܦܬܝܐ ܒܐܘܪܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܘܟܠ
ܛܥܝܬܐ ܕܢܦܩܝܢ ܡܢ ܝܕܘܥܘܢ ܢܐܦܐ ܠܒܢܝܢܐܗ. ܗܘ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ
ܫܝܠܢܐ ܕܡܫܬܟܚܢܐ. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܡܢܟܘ ܐܦܝܫܘܗ ܡܢܗ
ܒܐܦܝܗܘܢ܀

16. Who would not love you, O Repentance bearer of all good things, except Satan who hates you because you plunder his riches. You destroy his possessions and make him indigent. You torture him with the vain efforts of his works and you separate him from the heirs that were not his but were held captive by him. This one is truly your enemy and at every moment you oppose him. There is no one who has fallen into his hands, and once you have seized him did he become a prey again to Satan for food. There is no one who has called you while he was between Satan's teeth without you breaking his teeth and rescuing him. There is no one whom Satan has swallowed and who has from his belly implored you, without your tearing open his belly and bringing him out.
17. There is no one whom Satan entangled when you were not near and he called to you, without you having quickly cut his bonds and freed him. There is no one whom Satan snatched while you were far away, and he called to you, without you having immediately caught up and rescued him. Because of all of these things the devil hates you for you have hated him intensely. He hates you because at all times you stand against him; he hates you because he is the enemy of your Giver. And you oppose him as also your Lord Himself, his adversary, opposes him.
18. There is no one who has sought refuge with you and then gone down into Sheol, nor has anyone gone up to heaven without being yours. Who has seen God without you? And who has caught hold of you and fallen into the hands of Satan? Who has been purified unless you have washed him? And who has drawn near to your basin and anything unclean was found in him? Who has not watered his seed from your rain without reaping a sheaf of joy from it? Who is he who has applied for your remedy and not been found far from all infirmities?
19. Who is he who has not drawn near to your door and in whom there is a healthy place? Who is moistened at all times with your sprinkling and has not seen God in his heart? Who has not tasted your drink and whose heart has not become a source of darkness? Who has received his request without your speaking on his behalf? And who has received you through his petition and did not open thereby the door of God's treasures?

16. ܡܛܠ ܕܠܐ ܬܬܒܥܘܢ ܠܐܒܗܬܐ ܠܡܒܥܐ ܥܠܠ ܠܟܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܫܬܩܐ ܕܦܫܐ
ܠܟܘܢ. ܕܟܪܐ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܒܡܠܘܗܝ. ܘܡܫܘܚܬܐ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܡܢܝܢܗܘܢ. ܘܡܟܝܠܐ
ܐܢܬܘܢ ܠܗ ܙܒܢܐ. ܘܡܫܟܚܐ ܡܢ ܡܬܪܘܬܐ ܫܬܝܩܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢܗܘܢ.
ܘܡܫܘܚܬܐ ܡܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܕܒܥܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܝܠܗ. ܗܘܐ ܫܠܡܢ ܒܫܪܪܐ. ܕܐܦ
ܐܢܬܘܢ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܕܠܫܘܒܚܗ. ܟܠ ܕܒܟܠ ܒܐܬܪܘܬܗܘܢ
ܘܐܪܓܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܒܝܬܐ ܠܡܥܡܪܘܬܐ. ܟܠ ܕܡܢܝܢ ܒܝ
ܗܘ ܟܠ ܡܢܗܘܢ. ܘܠܐ ܠܐܝܢܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܘܐܒܝܠܘܬܗܘܢ. ܟܠ
ܕܒܢܝܢܗ ܥܠܝܠ ܠܐܝܕܝ ܡܢ ܒܪܝܬܗ. ܘܠܐ ܢܬܠܘܢ ܒܒܪܝܬܗ
ܘܐܫܬܠܡܘܬܗܘܢ܀

17. ܟܠ ܕܒܢܝܢܗ ܒܝ ܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܘܡܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܠܗ ܡܫܬܠܡܐ
ܦܫܡܬܐ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ ܘܡܢܝܢܘܬܗܘܢ. ܟܠ ܕܪܝܘܗ ܒܝ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܙܒܢܐ
ܐܢܬܘܢ ܘܡܢܝܢ. ܘܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܠܟܗ ܐܪܓܘܬܐ ܦܓܪܢܝܬܐ. ܡܬܠܠ
ܗܠܝܢ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܫܠܡܝܢ ܫܠܐ ܠܟܘܢ: ܘܐܫܬܟܚܬ ܘܫܒܝܬܗܘܢ.
ܫܠܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܕܒܠܚܘܕ ܦܫܛܐ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܠܫܘܒܚܗ. ܫܠܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܕܫܠܐܐ
ܗܘ ܕܢܫܘܒܚܘܢ. ܐܦ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܕܠܫܘܒܚܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܡܢܝܢ
ܫܘܒܚܗ܀

18. ܟܠ ܕܐܝܟ ܒܝܢ ܢܡܘܣܐ ܘܐܬܐܠܝܢ ܠܫܘܒܚܐ: ܘܠܐ ܕܡܫܠܡ
ܠܫܡܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܝܠܢ. ܡܛܠ ܚܝܠܗܘܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܟܠܙܒܢ. ܘܡܢ ܕܐܝܟ
ܒܝܢ ܘܒܟܠ ܒܛܝܪ ܫܠܝܐ. ܡܢ ܕܐܬܝܢ ܕܠܗ ܐܢܬܘܢ
ܐܫܬܟܚܬܘܢ. ܘܡܛܠ ܡܢܝܢ ܠܫܡܫܘܬܢ ܘܐܬܒܥܝܬ ܒܗ
ܠܫܘܬܐ. ܡܢ ܠܐ ܐܫܟܚ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܢ ܡܬܠܬܝܢ. ܘܚܕ ܡܢܗ ܦܬܐ
ܕܢܬܝܬܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢܝܢ ܠܐܫܬܘܐܝܢ. ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܙܒܝܢ ܡܢ ܡܘܬܒܐ܀

19. ܘܐܝܟ: ܕܠܐ ܡܢܝܢ ܙܒ ܠܙܒܢܝܢ. ܘܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܕܗܘܠܐ ܕܡܢܝܢܐ. ܡܛܠ
ܐܪܬܝܐ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܒܬܫܡܫܬܢ. ܘܠܐ ܚܕܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܘܡܛܠ
ܕܠܐ ܬܥܒܕ ܦܫܘܛܝܢ. ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܕܟܠܐ ܕܚܘܒܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܢܫܟܚ
ܡܫܠܡܘܗܝ. ܒܝ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ ܠܐ ܦܠܠܢ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܢܫܟܚܘܢ
ܒܦܘܫܩܗ. ܘܠܐ ܦܓܥܘ ܒܠܥܕ ܚܝܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ܀

20. There is no one who has taken you with him for battle without your having delivered his enemies to his sword. There is no one who has clothed himself in you before his Adversary without those who hate him being defeated before him. You delivered David who sinned.[18] You stood before Ahab, the infidel.[19] A rebuke was decreed against the Ninevites, but you acted mightily and rose up and saved them.[20]
21. You are blessed, O mother of pardon, you whom the Father full of mercies has given to us: He does not resist you when you entreat Him for He has placed you as an advocate to sinners. He does not close his door when you petition, for to you He has entrusted the keys of the Kingdom. Indeed *the Kingdom is at hand: repent*![21] This is the seal which the heirs of the Kingdom take with them: "Repent, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand! Take repentance along with you, lest you become strangers to the Kingdom!"
22. The first generation which did not drink her draught, anger drowned it by the flood.[22] Sodom which did not want to receive her, a heavenly fire consumed it.[23] Pharaoh who drove her from him was smitten by the drowning waves.[24] But whoever takes her with him in his company, chastisement obeys her word. When the Creator[25] commands, chastisement punishes without pity, but when he petitions repentance, she is quiet and finds peace instead of doing harm. It is she who restores the works which Satan has destroyed. And she bestows heavenly gifts. She renews virginity which has been stained and she keeps from harm whoever has not been corrupted.

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[18] cf. 2 Sam.7:13.
[19] cf. 1 Kings 21:27–29.
[20] cf. Jonah 3:5.
[21] Matt. 3:2; 4:17.
[22] cf. Gen. 6.
[23] cf. Gen. 19.
[24] cf. Ex. 14:28.
[25] 'Creator' does not occur in the Syriac text used here but is found in ms B and in the Arabic version, as noted by Beulay.

20. ܒܝܬ ܕܢܣܒܒܢ ܒܗܘ ܒܡܪܒܐ܆ ܘܠܐ ܐܫܬܟܚܬ ܒܚܙܒܗ
ܒܒܢܝ̈ܒܘܗܝ. ܒܝܬ ܕܟܒܫܢ ܒܗܘܡܠܐ ܕܒܗܘܒܠܗ܆
ܘܠܐ ܐܫܬܟܚܬ ܡܩܪܒܘܗܝ ܦܠܘܛ̈ܘܗܝ. ܐܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܘܗܝ
ܒܓܘ ܕܚܝܠܐ܆ ܘܐܬܐ ܡܟܬܒ ܒܪܩܘܗܝ ܕܐܝܟ ܦܓܘܪܐ.
ܣܦܪ ܠܘܢܝܐ ܒܠܐ ܚܝܘܬܐ܆ ܘܐܬܚܒܪܬ ܘܡܟܬܒ
ܘܦܪܘܩܬ ܐܠܗ܀
21. ܒܪܢܫܐ ܐܝܟ ܐܡܐ ܕܝܠܕܬܐ܆ ܕܡܘܠܕܐ ܠܗ ܐܒܐ ܡܠܐ ܪܚܡܬܐ.
ܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܠܡܘܠܕܘܬܗ ܡܢ ܛܠܝܘܬܗ. ܕܗܘ ܡܘܠܕ
ܡܫܬܪܪܐ ܒܚܝ̈ܠܬܐ. ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܬܘܒܝܗ ܡܢ ܛܠܝܘܬܗ܆ ܕܒܟܠ
ܐܫܟܚ ܡܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ. ܡܪܝܡ ܒܢܝܢ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ. ܬܘܒ܆
ܗܘܐ ܛܒܐ ܕܢܗܒܘܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܢܓܪܐ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ. ܬܘܒ
ܡܪܝܡ ܒܗ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܗܢܐ. ܫܒܩ ܒܒܘܠܗܘܢ ܬܢܒܘܬܐ
ܕܠܐ ܬܗܘܘܢ ܡܢܗ ܢܘܟ̈ܪܝܐ܀
22. ܕܪܐ ܡܪܡܐ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܦܣܘܬܗ܆ ܢܦܫܗ ܪܘܚܐ ܒܦܓܘܠܐ.
ܫܪܘܡ ܕܠܐ ܙܒܢ ܕܐܦܒܢܗ܆ ܐܘܪܝܬܗ ܢܘܪܐ ܫܡܝܢܝܬܐ.
ܦܪܚܘܢ ܕܬܪܥܗ ܡܢ ܙܝܘܗܝ܆ ܐܬܬܪܦ ܒܚܫܟܠܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ. ܒܠܐ
ܕܢܫܒܗ ܒܗܘ ܒܠܒܘܬܗ܆ ܡܪܕܘܬܐ ܠܟܒܠܬܗ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܐ.
ܐܡܬܝ ܕܩܡ ܒܗ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܘܩܦ. ܘܡܐ ܕܐܦܫܗ ܫܒܝܠ
ܘܐܫܬܠܡܬ ܡܢ ܕܒܥܐܠܗ. ܗܝ ܡܦܣܐ ܒܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܕܐܘܒܢ ܫܘܬܐ.
ܘܗܝ ܡܦܣܩܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܦܥܝܐ. ܗܝ ܡܥܕܪܐ ܒܠܘܒܘܬܐ
ܘܐܬܬܦܫܬ. ܘܗܝ ܡܢܝܪܐ ܘܠܐ ܢܚܦ ܠܐܚܪܐ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܢܒܠܬ܀

23. Glory to the One who has come to save us, and who with his own voice has preached repentance to us when He said: "Repent! For when you have repented then you will be saved and you will find the Kingdom which is near to you and is hidden within you,"[26]—calling "Kingdom" his revelation in those who love Him. As also of his coming He said: "The Kingdom is near." And the Apostle says: If Christ is not in you, you are reprobates,[27] that is, strangers from the Kingdom.
24. And as by repentance Christ saved captives, so Satan by means of amusement and pleasure and ease, has led those who are not his to himself. *Narrow is the way*[28] of repentance, but it leads to the Kingdom *to be with Christ in God.*[29] Broad is the way of satisfactions and pleasures, but it leads to the darkness of Satan to be with him in Gehenna. And as a kingdom judges in wisdom what is fitting, so Christ the Wisdom of the Father,[30] our Kingdom forever, judges and manages all in his wisdom, higher than all, because He is the understanding of the Father, source of all wisdoms, the store of treasures. To Him glory from all, forever and ever!
25. Whoever's tears at the time of his repentance are less than his draught has not yet shown genuine repentance. If the bones and the flesh, from the toenails to the brain, grew hot with the heat of suffering, they would have released all their moisture and been left dried up. And so the unclean spirit is not able to wander there in these waterless places.[31] But if the hand of Jesus Christ does not touch the heart, this cannot happen. And if there is one whose heart is hard let him take refuge in the prayers of others.

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[26] cf. Lk. 17:21.
[27] cf. 2 Cor. 13:5.
[28] Matt. 7:14.
[29] Col. 3:13.
[30] cf. 1 Cor. 1:24.
[31] cf. Matt. 12:43; Lk 11:24.

23. ܡܘܟܟܐ ܠܒܪܗ ܕܐܬܐ ܕܢܦܪܘܩ ܘܫܡܠܗ ܐܓܪܐ ܠܟ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܡܢ ܐܡܪ ܕܠܐܘܒܗ ܕܡܝܐ ܕܠܐܚܘܗܝ܆ ܗܘܝܢ ܠܐܬܦܪܣܘܗܝ. ܘܠܡܫܝܚܘܗܝ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ ܦܪܝܫܐ ܘܠܥܠܡܗ ܡܢܟܘܢ ܡܛܠܡܐ܆ ܡܢ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܠܡܫܬܥܒܕܢܘܬܗ ܕܒܪ̈ܢܫܘܗܝ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܒܠܠ ܡܐܬܝܬܗ ܐܡܪ. ܕܡܪܓܠ ܠܗ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ. ܘܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܡܪ. ܠܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܟܠ ܒܟܘܢ܆ ܡܬܩܒܠܐ ܐܠܗܝ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ ܢܘܟܪ̈ܝܐ ܡܢ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ܀

24. ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܦܪܩ ܡܓܒܠܬܐ܆ ܗܟܢܐ ܫܠܝܛܐ ܠܒܢ ܓܒܠܐ ܘܦܘܪܥܢܐ ܘܪܘܚܢܘܬܐ ܕܟܪ ܠܗ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܕܝܠܗ. ܠܟܠܢܫ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܐܢܫܘܬܐ. ܒܪܡ ܕܝܢ܆ ܡܛܠ ܠܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ܆ ܠܡܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܐܠܗܘܬܐ. ܪܘܒܚܐ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܒ̈ܢܝܐ ܘܦܘܪܥܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܡܦܢܝܐ ܠܒܝܬܗ ܕܫܠܝܛܐ ܠܡܗܘܐ ܒܡܕܡ ܒܥܘܢܐ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܒܣܓܝܐܬܐ ܕܙܢܐ ܘܡ̈ܠܟܐ܆ ܗܟܢܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܕܡܘܬܗ ܕܐܒܐ ܡܫܠܡܢܝ ܕܠܟܠܢ. ܒܠܠ ܕܐܦ ܘܡܦܪܢܣ ܒܫܘܡܠܗ ܪܡܙܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ. ܡܢ ܗܘܝܘ ܕܒܠܒܗ ܕܐܒܐ. ܘܡܦܪܢܣ ܟܠܐ ܢܩܝܡ. ܘܝܨܪܐ ܕܣܘ̈ܟܠܬܐ ܕܠܗ ܡܘܟܟܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܠܟܠܟܢ ܠܥܠܡ ܐܡܝܢ܀

25. ܗܢ ܕܒܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܢܫܘܬܗ܆ ܒܪ̈ܝܬܐ ܕܩܕ̈ܡܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܦܩܘܕܘܬܗ܆ ܠܐ ܒܕܒܠܐ ܢܦܫ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܢܬܠܬܬܐ. ܠܠܗ ܢܒܥܘ ܒ̈ܪܝܬܐ ܒܗܢ ܒܣܝܪܐ܆ ܡܢ ܛܒ̈ܬܐ ܠܡܥܒܕܐ ܒܥܝܪܐ ܕܣܛܢܐ܆ ܦܪܩܝܢ ܗܘܘ ܪܘܚܢܝܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܠܒܗ ܘܡܫܝܚܐ ܩܕܡܝܢ ܗܘܘ. ܘܡܫܟܠܠ ܪܘܚܐ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܠܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܗ ܒܐܬܪ̈ܘܬܐ ܕܩܕܡܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚܐ. ܒܪܡ ܠܝ ܡܫܝܚܗ ܕܢܩܘܡ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܐ ܦܪܩܐ ܠܟܠܐ܆ ܗܘܐ ܠܡܗܘܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚܐ. ܘܐܦ ܐܠܐ ܕܝܡܐ ܠܟܠܗ. ܢܬܦܪܫ ܒܪ̈ܘܚܬܐ ܕܐܢܫ̈ܐ܀

26. For example, one who is vexed and tempted by demons, is troubled and agitated and disturbed, reviling those who pray for him. But when he is saved from the demons by means of the prayer of others, he is restrained and regrets what he has done. So also, one who is vexed by a demon through the passions of licentiousness, is hard of heart, wrathful, a detractor, a slanderer, avaricious, troublesome, jealous, disorderly, rabid—and not only has no regret about these things, but even scorns penitents.
27. But with God's help, when the devil, who misled him and made him to sin is cast out by the prayers of the diligent ones, his heart is humbled. He is composed and chastened. He makes lamentation. He weeps. He is at peace and regrets his faults. He remembers his soul. He knows his weakness and asks for mercy. He rejoices with those who repent. He suffers for the weak and is filled with pity for the afflicted. He remains with the pure, beseeching them to show him the way of God, submitting himself before them he asks for mercy and persuades them to help him by prayer to find the strength to progress. His soul is shining, his work is pure and his odor is perfumed by the gifts of grace. He is loved by the angels, he tramples on the demons and scorns their inducements. He rules over the passions and conquers sin. Day after day he penetrates the mysteries of the Spirit, obtains confidence in prayer and his heart exults with joy. He goes up to God with his help and shines in his Glory. He becomes well acquainted with his mysteries and is made worthy of the blessing of his vision. This is the profit from prayer to the one who earnestly asks for it.

26. ܐܟܡܐ ܕܐܝܢܐ ܕܟܐܒ ܒܟ̈ܠܝܬܐ ܘܡܬܐܢܚ܆ ܥܪܝܩ ܘܪܗܛ
ܘܡܨܘܚ ܘܡܬܟܢܫ ܠܐܣ̈ܝܐ ܕܡܢܟܝܢ ܢܫܟܦܘܢ܆ ܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܬܦܪܩ
ܡܢ ܟ̈ܐܒܐ ܟܕ ܚܠܡܬ ܘܐܬܦܨܝ܆ ܡܬܗܦܟ ܘܡܬܒܣܡ ܒܟܠ
ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܩܕܡ ܗܘܐ. ܗܟܢܐ ܐܦ ܐܝܢܐ ܕܟܐܒ ܒܟ̈ܠܝܬܐ ܟܕ ܒ̈ܢܝܐ
ܕܚܛܗܐ܆ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܟܠ ܚܠܦ. ܦܬܓܡܐ ܦܘܠܘܣ. ܐܘܟܡܪܐ.
ܚܝܠܐ. ܠܚܝܠܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܥܫܝܢܐ. ܦܡܐ. ܘܟܠ ܟܢܫܘܗܝ ܒܟܠ
ܗܟܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܐ܆ ܐܠܐ ܐܦ ܡܬܚܫܠ ܒܟܢ̈ܝܐ܀

27. ܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܬܘܕܝܬܐ ܠܠܗܐ ܐܬܟܢܫ ܡܢܗ ܚܠܝܐ ܦܛܝܒܘܬܐ
ܘܦܩܝܚܐ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܒܥܝܬܐ. ܡܬܦܩܕ ܠܒܗ. ܡܬܛܒܥ
ܘܡܬܢܚܡ. ܡܬܐܟܠܠ. ܚܒܠ ܡܦܠܓ. ܡܬܬܐ ܒܟܠ
ܦܘ̈ܩܕܢܘܗܝ. ܘܟܘܠܗ ܢܦܫܗ. ܘܢܕܪ ܡܣܒܟܬܗ. ܘܥܠܡܠ
ܙ̈ܕܝܩܐ. ܘܢܕܪ ܒܟܢ̈ܝܐ. ܘܢܬܚܫ ܒܟܠ ܡܬܚܢܢܐ. ܘܡܬܚܫܒ ܢܦܫܢܐ
ܒܟܠ ܐܠܗ̈ܐ. ܘܡܬܐܡܢ ܓܝܪ ܕܟܢܐ. ܘܟܠ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ ܒܗ
ܐܘܪܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܘܡܬܦܩܕ ܡܕܡܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܥܡܠܐ ܙ̈ܕܝܩܐ.
ܘܡܬܚܫܒ ܒܗܘܢ ܕܢܬܪܘܚܘܢ ܒܪܘܚܐ. ܕܢܬܚܝ ܚܝܠܐ
ܒܡܬܕܡܪܐ. ܘܚܘܪܐ ܢܦܫܗ ܘܕܟܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ. ܘܟܘܠܗܝ ܙܕܝܩܘܬܗ
ܒܦܘܩܕܢܝ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ. ܘܡܬܪܚܡ ܒܟܠ ܡܢܬܐ. ܘܡܦܩܚ ܒܟ̈ܐܒܐ
ܘܡܟܫܦ ܒܟܠ ܒܥܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܬܦܠܛ ܒܟܠ ܚܠܐ ܘܒܟܐ
ܒܚܝ̈ܠܘܬܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܢ ܡܬܦܢܐ ܒܪ̈ܐܙܐ ܪܘܚܐ. ܘܦܠܐ
ܦܐܪ̈ܘܬܐ ܒܪܘܚܐ. ܘܙܕܩ ܠܒܗ ܒܚܕܘܬܐ. ܘܦܟܪ ܒܟܠ
ܠܠܗܐ ܒܬܘܕܝܬܐ ܕܡܢܗ. ܘܡܕܘܪܗ ܒܫܘܒܚܗ. ܘܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܐ
ܒܪ̈ܐܙܘܗܝ. ܘܡܫܬܐ ܠܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܚܝܠܗ. ܗܘ ܗܘ ܕܐܢܐ ܕܡܢ
ܒܟܠܡܬܐ܆ ܠܐܝܠܐ ܕܡܫܒܚܬ ܦܠܠ܀

LETTER 44

1. We are not able to repay you, my brother, for your love of us. For we have not found the Bread of Life which the diligent acquire by their personal sweat, with which we might nourish our friends with profusion of heart and kind regard. But I believe in Christ, my Lord, that He will repay you according to the greatness of his grace.
2. My brother, this is the time of grief. Only with difficulty and great labor can a person save himself from the snares of the Beguiler. Be covered, my brother, with humility at all times for it will clothe your soul in Christ, its donor. A beautiful bright star will shine out for the humble one from his heart[1] and at each genuflection during prayer, he will see its beautiful reflections. Lay hold of modesty and chastity because they purify your soul from the defilement of the passions that befoul the dissolute like me. Control your sleep and your belly with moderation that your soul might take delight in a sleep of spiritual dreams and in radiant thoughts when awake. Restrain your tongue from all vain words that your mind might rule over the passions and the wicked demons. Guard against anger and angry persons because they deprive the soul of the holy light. Separate yourself from the one whose manner of life is not orderly and set right, lest he make you into a slave of sin.

[1] cf. 2 Peter 1:19.

ܛܥܢܬܐ ܕܐܪ̈ܒܥܝܢ ܘܐܪ̈ܒܥܐ.

1. ܥܠ ܐܦ̈ ܚܘܒܝ ܕܥܘܠܝ ܐܚܝ: ܚܝ ܕܢܦܪܩܝ ܠܐ ܦܫܩܝܢ.
ܠܐ ܛܥܢ ܡܚܝܠ ܥܡ ܥܒܕ ܚܝܠܐ ܕܥܒܘܕܬܐ ܕܡܬܡܬܡܘܢ ܦܠܚ
ܒܡܬ̈ܪܐ: ܕܒܗ ܥܬ̈ܝܕܝܢ ܠܐܪܥܐ ܒܡܦܩܒܘܬܐ ܥܒܕܐ ܘܚܝܠܐ
ܛܥܬܐ. ܒܪܡ ܡܬܡܢܥ ܐܢܐ ܒܡܡܒܝܢܐ ܡܪܝ: ܕܦܪܩ ܥܒܝ ܐܝܟ
ܪܒܘܬܐ ܛܒܥܘܬܗ܀

2. ܐܚܝ: ܙܒܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܥܡܠܬܐ. ܘܥܠܡܢܝܢ ܘܒܥܡܠܐ ܪܒܐ ܡܡܒܚ
ܐܝܟ ܥܡܦܘܪܒܘ ܢܦܫܗ ܡܢ ܦܬ̈ܘܗܝ ܕܢܒܠܐ. ܐܬܦܠܛ ܐܚܝ
ܡܢܒܘܬܐ ܒܥܠܒܝ: ܕܗܘ ܡܥܠܒܢܐ ܥܠܦܝ ܥܡܡܒܝܢܐ
ܢܗܘܒܗ. ܒܗܒܥܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܡܘܦ̈ܪܐ ܥܡܒܥܒܐ ܡܢ ܥܒܗ ܕܢܚ
ܥܗ. ܘܒܥܠܐ ܦܪܥܐ ܕܒܠܥܘܬܐ ܢܚܐ ܙ̈ܩܢܘܗܝ ܦܩܬ̈ܐ. ܐܝܟܘ
ܒܝܒܘܬܐ ܘܢܒܘܬܐ. ܕܗܘܝ ܡܬܠܠܝ ܥܠܦܝ ܡܢ ܛܡܐܘܬܐ ܕܢ̈ܦܫܐ
ܡܪ̈ܘܡܝ ܥܬ̈ܦܐ ܕܐܒܘܗܝ. ܛܒܘܗ ܡܝܠܝ ܘܒܪܫܝ
ܒܡܡܘܚܝܬܐ. ܕܐܬܦܫܡ ܢܦܫܝ ܒܡܝܬܐ ܒܢ̈ܒܠܡܐ ܙ̈ܘܚܠܐ:
ܘܒܒܝܪܘܬܐ ܒܚܘܩܒܐ ܕܐܗܘܝܬܐ. ܛܒܘܗ ܠܥܡܝ ܡܢ ܥܠܠ ܩ̈ܠܠ
ܦܩܝܡܬܐ: ܕܢܛܥܠܛܗ ܗܘܝ ܥܠܠ ܢܬ̈ܡܐ ܘܩ̈ܠܝܐ ܙ̈ܡܝܒܐ. ܡܢ
ܢܡܬܐ ܘܚܩ̈ܒܠܐ ܐܪܕܗܪ. ܕܗܘܢ ܫܒܠܝܢ ܥܠܦܡܐ ܡܢ ܢܗܘܪܐ
ܡܪܡܐ. ܡܢ ܐܝܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܛܒܥ ܘܐܡܢ ܕܗܒܪܗ ܐܪܝܡ ܢܦܫܝ ܕܠܐ
ܢܒܥܪܝ ܓܒܪܐ ܕܚܛܝܬܐ܀

3. Let your intimacy be with the friends of God that your soul might resemble their purity. Sing praises in your soul[2] at all times that your heart might become a temple for God.[3] Guard your eyes from all displays which stir up desire. Do not be the friend of a young boy because he makes the one who associates with him into an evil-doer. Remain alone with yourself that you might be a sharer in God's mysteries. Great is the man of discernment; everything he does is for God and the fruits of his labor are eternal life. Obey all the commands of your brothers and like a wise person, knowingly preserve your soul from any harmful commandment. These things are sufficient for one who is wise.

[2] Eph. 3:19.
[3] 1 Cor. 3:16.

3. ܟܢ ܪ̈ܘܚܦܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܟܝܢܢ܇ ܕܐܬܝܬ ܢܦܫܢ ܕܘܡܝܐ
ܕܕܝܠܗܘܢ. ܦܓܪ ܒܢܦܫܢ ܒܠܒܒܢ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܠܟܝܢ ܗܡܠܐ
ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܠܗ ܒܚܝܝܢ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܢܬܘܐ ܡܒܝ̈ܬܝ ܪ̈ܓܓܠܐ. ܘܪܢܝܢܐ
ܒܡܥܒܠܐ ܠܐ ܠܒܘܫܐ. ܕܦܠܠ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܟܒܪ ܠܐܝܠܐ ܕܢܬܦ ܠܗܘ.
ܕܘܒ ܡܚܝܢ ܘܟܠܢ܇ ܕܠܐܠܗܐ ܠܒܘܫܐ ܒܪ ܙܐܪܐ. ܙܟ ܗܘ ܗܘ ܒܓܪܐ
ܕܦܘܪܫܢܐ. ܕܟܠܐ ܕܦܓܪ ܡܛܠܠ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܗܘ. ܘܦܐܪ̈ܝ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ
ܚܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܟܟܢ. ܐܫܬܡܥ ܟܟܠܐ ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܕܐܚܝܢ. ܘܗܘܢ
ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܡܚܣܪܢܐ ܒܝܒܠܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܒܝܗܘܬܐ ܦܘܪܥ ܢܦܫܢ.
ܗܟܝܢ ܟܢܝܫܘܬܐ ܩܦܫܢ܀

LETTER 45

1. My brother, each day when I begin again the labor of life[1] as if in a field, I have never seemed diligent to the owner of the vineyard.[2] And see, with shame I eat the bread of beggars and the eyes of my soul are darkened from lack of the Bread of Life which enlightens the eyes. Pray, my brother, that the darkness be dispelled from the face of our firmament and the bright Sun be visible with its beautiful reflections in our place. For look, its inhabitants stand in awe and await its appearance, gladdening those who seek Him.
2. Alas, how long will sighs distract our consolation? When will our joy last forever because the rising of our glorious Sun will not set in our place[3] and its inhabitants will never see a shadow? When indeed will our footsteps be in the incorporeal world whose light is the Spirit of Life? When will our God be our food, He who is the place and the nourishment of those who love Him, from whom they suck his sweet pleasurable life? When will we no longer be wearied in our world because we will have found rest from painful passions? When, indeed, will our delight be within us because of the coveted appearance of our sweet King?

[1] cf. *The Book of Paradise*, ed. and trans. E. A. W. Budge (London, 1904) 2 vols., I, p. 766, # 537 (Arsenius).

[2] cf. Matt. 20:1.

[3] cf. Is. 60:20.

ܕܐܪ̈ܒܥܝܢ ܘܚܡܫܐ.

1. ܐܢܐ ܐܚܝ̈: ܟܕ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܚܒܝܒ ܐܢܐ ܣܘܪܝܐ ܕܦܘܠܚܢ ܚܝ̈ܐ ܒܐܡܬܐ ܒܐܬܪܐ: ܘܠܐ ܡܫܠܡ ܐܬܚܙܝܬ ܠܟܬܒܐ ܒܙܒܢܐ ܙܥܘܪܐ. ܘܗܘܐ ܒܟܘܠܬܐ ܠܚܝܐ ܕܡܢܪܐ ܐܟܠܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܚܝ̈ܒܝܢ ܚܛܝ̈ܢ ܢܦܫ̈ ܡܢ ܚܫܒܘܢܬܐ ܕܟܠܢܝ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܒܟܠܗ. ܙܠܐ ܐܚܝ ܕܢܬܦܫܠܐ ܒܡܬܠܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܦ̈ܝ ܙܒܢܐ. ܘܠܐܝܕܐ ܒܐܬܪ̈ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܢܚܝܐ ܒܪ̈ܚܡܘܗܝ ܦ̈ܩܕܐ. ܕܗܘܐ ܒܐܝܕܗ ܩܕܝܡ ܕܢ̈ܝܪܘܗܝ: ܘܡܫ̈ܦܫܝܢ ܠܒܝܬܗ ܦܬܝܚ ܠܡ̈ܢܚܘܗܝ܀

2. ܘܟܕ ܒܙܒܢܐ ܠܐܡܠܟ ܐܬܬܚܐ ܦܠ̈ܚܝ ܒܘܢܝ̈ܐ. ܐܝܟܢ ܚܙܘܬܐ ܬܗܘܐ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ. ܕܫܡܥܢ ܡܥܝܢܐ ܡܢ ܐܬܪ̈ ܕܚܙܘ ܠܐ ܟܪܒ. ܘܟܣܘܪ̈ܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܠܐ ܡܫܠܡ ܠܐ ܢܗܡ. ܐܝܟܢ ܟܕ ܬܗܘܐ ܗܟܝܠ ܟܕ ܟܕܘܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܣܝܒܐ: ܕܢܘܗܪܗ ܐܠܗܘܢ ܪܘܚ ܚܝ̈ܐ. ܐܝܟܢ ܟܕ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܝܟܢ ܠܠܗ: ܕܗܘܝܘ ܐܬܪܐ ܘܬܘܪܨܐ ܡܬܚܒܠܢܐ: ܘܡܚܘ ܦܠܡܝܢ ܚܝ̈ܐ ܚܝ̈ܠܐ ܒܡܫ̈ܡܠܝܢ. ܐܝܟܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܡܝܢ ܠܐ ܒܦ̈ܪܫܐ: ܕܐܬܬܚܝܢ ܡܢ ܬܡܢ ܡܐܝܬܝܐ. ܐܝܟܢ ܟܕ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܗܘ ܒܣܘܣܡܢ: ܡܢ ܕܚܙܘ ܢܦܫܗ ܕܡܟܬܒ ܒܟܣܝܐ܀

3. Blessed is he who from out of himself inhales the Fragrance of Life[4] in the marvelous revelations of the Father which appear in him always. Blessed is the one who gazes continually in himself at the vision in the mirror[5] of spiritual beings. Blessed is he who listens within himself and conceals the hidden mysteries of the Holy Spirit. Blessed is the one whose soul speaks with the stirring which is from the Spirit and whose ordinary thoughts are silenced by the force of his astonishment. Such is the amazement of the one whose mind is stilled from movements. In the new mystery, he hears simple praise within himself to rejoice with, in the calm silence of his mind and of his tongue. This is the one who has received the tongues of the Spirit from heaven.

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[4] Fragrance of Life, *rîḥâʾ d-ḥayeʾ*, see Letter 1.1. In the Discourses, John uses "scent of the Creator" to describe what can be perceived in those who through baptism and Eucharist become united to Christ: "Ravenous beasts, cattle, birds, and noxious reptiles live peaceably with him, because they sniff the scent of their Creator off him; likewise stones and sticks and all inanimate things are at peace with him; and what is more even the rebellious (demons) show obedience to him as a result of the fear of him that comes over them." See Discourse 23, H. 27b–28a. See also Beulay, ES, 175–178.

[5] Mirror (*maḥzîtâ*), see Letter 14.2.

3. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܒܕܘ ܡܢܗ ܦܠܛܘ ܪܕܝ ܚܝ̈ܐ: ܒܟܠܢ̈ܘܗܝ
ܠܗܘܕܪܐ ܕܐܟܠ ܕܡܠܡܠ ܒܗ ܕܢܣܒ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܝܗܘ ܒܗ
ܡܢ ܒܐܡܝܢܘ: ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܙܘܥܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ
ܕܝܗܘ ܒܗ ܙܪܥܐ ܘܫܓܫ ܬܐܪܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܫܦܠܐ ܕܪܘܚܐ ܡܢܚܐ.
ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܡܣܬܟܠܝܢ ܕܢܦܩܘ ܐܘܪܚܗ ܡܢ ܙܘܥܐ ܗܘ:
ܘܢܕܩܘܠ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܬܠܒܫܘ ܡܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܗ. ܕܘܡܪܐ ܗܘ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܒܠܐ ܗܘܝܘ ܡܢ ܐܘܟܠ. ܒܪܐܐ ܚܕܬܐ ܠܡܫܘܚܬܐ
ܦܫܝܛܐ ܦܫܛ ܝܗܘ ܒܗ ܠܒܪܘܬܗ: ܒܫܟܠܐ ܦܬܝܚܐ ܕܝܗܘܗܝ
ܘܠܟܠܗ. ܗܘܘ ܕܡܟܬܒ ܙܘܥܐ ܦܬܟܐ ܡܢ ܙܘܡܪܐ܀

LETTER 46

1. There is nothing pleasurable or good like our God and there is no fragrance comparable to the sweetness of his knowledge. So that when the miracle of it had drawn me on, as someone has told me: "I stood senseless, and when I was revived I began to fly in the abyss and to breathe the Spirit of Life. I flew and was raised above everything, but I did not have strength and again I plunged and I retreated and did not attain anything and, dismayed, I remained in this way. Then again I was in it and with it, all in all and beyond all in its beautiful vision, yet I did not attain its length or its breadth. And again I turned and returned to the sweetness known to me."
2. I cry out in my excitement: "Alas, my Lord, who is capable for it? Blessed is the one who loves You, O Beloved of whom one is not able to be sated! Because while You have filled me greatly with Yourself, my hunger has increased in me with a desire of You that surpasses my strength." I say in my frantic folly, "O my Lord, who can endure it? Because while You have thrown me into your deep abyss that I might drink without measure, the inebriation of your love inflames me, and my heart burns with thirst for your watercourse."[1]

[1] Ps. 42:1.

ܕܐܪ̈ܒܥܝܢ ܘܚܡܫ.

1. ܥܠ ܕܚܫܝܢ ܘܐܦ ܐܝܟ ܠܐܠܗܗ. ܘܡܫܒܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܠܬܗ
ܥܠ ܗܘܢܐ ܕܦܫܝܢ. ܗܘ ܕܡܢ ܠܗܘܪܘ ܢܦܫܗ: ܐܡܪ ܠܗ
ܐܢܫ: ܠܐ ܡܪܚܡܬܐ ܦܡܫ. ܘܡܢ ܐܢܫܐ. ܡܪܢܫ ܒܠܗܘܘܬܐ
ܓܝܪ ܐܢܐ: ܘܫܦܝܪ ܪܘܚ ܚܝܐ. ܦܪܢܫ ܘܐܬܟܬܒܫ ܒܒܠܐ ܡܢ
ܟܠܐ: ܘܠܐ ܐܬܡܪܝܫ ܒܚܝܠܐ: ܘܐܬܒ ܟܡܕܐ ܘܐܬܟܪܗܫ ܘܠܐ
ܐܘܪܚܫ. ܘܗܘܡ ܐܬܟܬܒܗܫ ܘܦܡܫ. ܘܐܬܒ ܒܗ ܘܡܒܕܗ ܟܠܐ
ܒܒܠܐ ܗܘܝܫ: ܘܡܬܒܠܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܒܝܕܘܗ ܦܡܝܪܐ: ܘܠܐ
ܐܡܒܝܫ ܐܘܪܒܗ ܘܦܫܝܗ. ܘܐܬܒ ܗܦܒܫ ܒܬܦܫ
ܠܒܘܣܡܝܢ ܕܝܡܝܐ܀

2. ܘܐܦ ܡܪܝ ܕܝܘ ܦܦܡ: ܒܡܕܠܗܘܒ ܦܒܠ ܐܝܐ. ܬܗܒܘܗܒ
ܠܪܢܡܝܟ ܐܘ̄ ܕܝܕܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܒܚܢܐ. ܕܡܢ ܒܟ ܦܦܝܢ
ܦܒܬܝܢ. ܒܦܢܘܐܒ ܒܪܬܟ ܟܦܕܫ ܒܒܒ ܢܬܪ ܡܢ
ܢܝܠܐ. ܘܐܦ ܡܪܝ ܕܝܘ ܡܦܦܒܪ: ܒܡܝܘܐܒ ܐܡܪ ܐܝܐ. ܕܡܢ
ܒܬܘܘܡܟ ܕܝܬܝܢ ܕܐܡܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܠܐ: ܪܘܡܐ ܕܝܕܬܟ ܦܪܐ
ܒܒ: ܗܘܐ ܢܡܢ ܒܒܒ ܒܪܘܡܐ ܒܦܪܝܕܟ܀

3. O bright darkness, adorning the face of the one who loves You to the amazement of the demons who cause upset! O dark enlightenment, illuminating the pupils of my eyes with its vision, to perceive all which is done in darkness in the inner rooms! The person in whose soul the tongue of your Spirit has murmured your holy mysteries, will understand these obscure things. And whoever has seen your beautiful manifestation within his heart and been stupefied, let him exult at the sight of the images which intimate the greatness of the revelations to him.
4. But I know my weakness and am silent. From now on, I will hold my peace because there is no one able to tell of your visions, O Seer of all. Glory to You from all, who crowns those who love Him, forever and ever. Amen.

3. ܐܘ ܟܘܟܒܬܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܙܗܪܐ ܦܪܨܘܦ ܪܘܡܗ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܫܘܝܘܬܐ.
ܐܘ̄ ܢܗܝܪܐ ܟܘܟܒܬܐ ܡܢܗܪ ܒܟ̈ܠܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝ ܒܝܬܗ܆ ܠܡܢܪܬܐ
ܟܠܗ ܕܒܐܘ̈ܪܚܬܐ ܒܫܡܫܐ ܡܫܠܡܢܐ܆ ܡܢܗ ܕܒܢܗ ܠܟܡ
ܙܗܪ ܒܥܡܗ ܙ̈ܗܪܝ ܡܕ̈ܢܚܐ܆ ܢܫܬܟܚܘܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܒܡܘܬܗ.
ܡܢܗ ܕܢܚܬ ܕܢܚܪ ܡܥܢܝܐ ܒܝܢܬ ܠܒܢܘܗ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ܆ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܢܗܝܪܘܬܐ
ܕܪ̈ܘܙܐ ܕܪ̈ܘܡܐ ܠܟܠܗ ܙܒܢܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܘܢ܀
4. ܐܝܟ ܠܡܢܚܒܠܢ ܘܐܡܠܐ. ܐܫܬܘܩ ܠܟܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ. ܒܢ ܠܒܢܐ
ܕܦܘܩ ܕܫܥܬܐ ܢܬܒܝܚ ܢܒܐ ܟܠܐ. ܠܟܢ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ
ܡܦܠܠܢܐ ܕܪ̈ܡܫܝܢ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ܀

LETTER 47

1. That which you asked me to write, my brother, does not belong to us who are lazy and remiss; but it is for those who because of their vigor and the diligence of their mind in marveling at God, have obtained the clear vision of the heart[1] which allows them always to gaze intently on the divine light insatiably, and to learn its mysteries by divine and mysterious vision and not by hearing. Nevertheless, it is fitting for whoever wishes to write about this world to begin with weeping and to end with weeping; not because of the world, but on account of its inhabitants, wearied unduly by its labors; not because of the world, but because of its friends who when absorbed by desire for it *become enemies of God*, according to the word of the Apostle.[2]
2. The Creator established this world for trial and instruction.[3] It is the place of labor from which the workers gather grains for their delight in the world without end,[4] or wretched tares for their torment with the wicked one who sowed them.[5] It is a place of commerce from which merchants gather life for their great rejoicing or death for their shame.

[1] cf. Eph. 1:18.

[2] James 4:4.

[3] This reflects the Two Ages doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia. See note to Letter 37.4 which also includes a reference to Cyrus of Edessa and his use of this doctrine.

[4] cf. Jn. 4:36.

[5] cf. Matt. 13:25.

ܕܐܪ̈ܟܘܢ ܘܫ̈ܩܠܐ.

1. ܐܝܟܢ ܕܓܒܝܚܐ ܐܚܝ ܒܡܫܡܠܝܘܬ ܠܒܝ: ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܝܠܢ ܚܒ̈ܝܚܐ
ܘܡܫܡ̈ܠܝܐ ܐܠܗܝܢ. ܐܠܐ ܕܐܝܟܢ ܕܡܛܠ ܦܫܝܪܘܬܗܘܢ
ܘܡܫܒܗܪܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܝܗܘܢ ܬܗܪ ܒܐܠܗܐ: ܩܕܘ ܚܙܝܐ ܢܗܝܪܐ
ܕܟܠܐ: ܒܦܠܓܘܗ ܒܠܒܗ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܐܠܗܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܥܒܝܕ:
ܘܒܡܬܠܟܦ ܪ̈ܐܙܘܗܝ ܒܝܕܥܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܐ ܘܪܘܚܢܝܐ: ܘܠܐ ܡܢ ܦܬܓܡܐ.
ܒܪܡ ܙܕܩ ܠܐܚܐ ܕܟܠ ܒܟܠܐ ܗܢܐ ܒܫܡܠܝܘܬ ܪ̈ܒܐ. ܕܒܓܒܝܢܐ
ܢܦ̈ܫܐ ܘܒܒܝܢܐ ܢܦܩܢ. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܟܠ ܒܟܠܐ: ܐܠܐ ܟܠ
ܦܣܩܘ̈ܬܗܘܢ: ܠܒ̈ܢܝܢ ܒܡܩ̈ܒܠܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܠܒܪ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ
ܟܠ ܒܟܠܐ: ܐܠܐ ܟܠ ܪ̈ܝܫܝܬܗܘܢ. ܕܟܢ ܒܪ̈ܫܠܗ
ܡܬܦܠܓܝܢ. ܒܒܒ̈ܝܬܐ ܢܘܩܝ ܠܠܒܗܐ: ܐܝܟ ܕܒܠܬܐ
ܡܬܝܚܬܐ ܀

2. ܒܟܠܐ ܗܢܐ ܠܒܘܚܪܢܐ ܘܒܓܘܪܡܐ ܫܡܗ ܦܪܘܩܐ. ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ
ܕܦܘܠܚܢܐ: ܕܡܢܗ ܡܦܩܝܢ ܦܐ̈ܪܐ ܢܗ̈ܝܪܐ ܠܒܘܚܪ̈ܢܝܗܘܢ:
ܒܒܟܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܘܩܕܐ. ܐܘ ܩܛܠܐ: ܐܢܝܐ ܠܡܘܢܣܗܘܢ ܒܗܝܢ
ܪ̈ܘܚܗܘܢ ܢܦܫܐ. ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܓܘܪܐ. ܘܡܢܗ ܡܦܩܝܢ
ܐܬܪ̈ܐ ܚܝܐ ܠܒܪ̈ܝܬܗܘܢ: ܐܘ ܦܘܬܐ ܠܒܓܘܬܬܗܘܢ ܀

3. I too, with David, call blessed the one who always thinks about his departure and proceeds without blemish in the way of God.[6] Although the world is a place of shadow and darkness and the inhabitants grope in obscurity, yet all who by desire for God have shed its passions and appetites and have closed their eyes before the vapor of its hateful things which rises up and blinds the eyes of the intelligence: the light of the glory of God has appeared in their souls and they have acquired the wings of the Spirit from the living Spirit. They have flown and rested in the beautiful light in which Paul, the philosopher of the Spirit, says God dwells.[7]
4. They are no longer in this world, but in God. Nor are they workers of the flesh but of the Spirit.[8] Their mind does not think of the world, but their impulses originate in God, in silence and great wonder. Their intellects gain new strength[9] and always behold God. Instead of being human they have become divine, according to the foolish desire of their carnal father.[10] Therefore the world has been effaced from their hearts and they are enlightened by God. Henceforth they are considered crazy because they are smitten with desire of the beauty which captivates minds. They do not remember painful passions because they are dead to these things in Christ, the Slain Life-giver of all. And they have risen with Him beforehand in the glory of his Father, as the Apostle says, the interpreter of new things.[11]
5. Their soul is always inebriated with God's sweetness and knows no other desire outside of Him. Stillness, which pleases them, hearkens to the mysterious speech of the Spirit within them and they have restrained their mouths from speech which impedes. They have exchanged beauty for Beauty and intimacy for Intimacy.[12] They have exchanged pleasure for Pleasure and with the blood of their soul they have purchased Him who has redeemed them with his own blood.

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[6] cf. Ps. 15:2; 119:1.

[7] cf. 1 Tim. 6:16.

[8] cf. Rom. 8:5ff.

[9] cf. Eph. 4:23.

[10] cf. Gen. 3:5.

[11] cf. Rom. 6:5; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12.

[12] Beauty for Beauty and intimacy for Intimacy: an example of the transformational way John sees the ascetical life, not simply denial of human beauty or intimacy, but exchanging them for an even greater reality.

3. ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܐܬܠܠ ܛܘܒܐ ܬܡܢ ܕܘܝ: ܚܠܦ ܕܒܠܒܗ ܙܢܐ
ܒܡܦܩܢܗ: ܘܕܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܙܕܐ ܒܐܘܪܚܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܐܦ ܒܟܠܡܐ ܐܬܪ̈ܐ
ܗܘ ܕܛܟܠܐ ܘܕܣܒܘܒܐ: ܘܒܟܠܡܕܡ ܡܫܡܫ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ: ܐܠܐ ܟܠ
ܕܒܟܠܗ ܢܦܫܗܘܢ ܘܬܪ̈ܥܝܬܗ ܒܪܥܝܬܐ ܕܒܐܠܗܐ: ܘܡܫܡܫܝܢ
ܒܢ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܐܝܠܐ ܕܒܥܝܢ̈ܝܗ: ܕܢܬܒܪ ܘܢܦܟܘܪ ܒܢ̈ܝܐ
ܠܥܒܝܕܬܐ: ܕܝܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܢܦܫ̈ܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܦܩ
ܫܩܦ ܙܘܚܐ ܒܪܘܚ ܢܚܐ: ܘܦܪܚܘ ܘܡܛܘ ܠܢܘܗܪܐ ܫܦܝܪܐ:
ܕܒܗ ܐܡܪ ܦܘܠܘܣ ܦܝܠܝܦܣ ܙܘܚܐ ܕܚܡܪ ܐܠܗܐ ⁘

4. ܘܠܐ ܬܘܒ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܒܐܠܗܐ. ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܒܣܪܐ
ܦܠܚܝܢ: ܐܠܐ ܕܪܘܚܐ. ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܒܥܠܡܐ ܗܢܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܗܘܘ: ܐܠܐ
ܒܐܠܗܐ ܢܒܥܝܢ ܘܚܝ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܒܡܠܬܐ ܘܦܓܪܐ ܪܒܐ. ܐܬܝܚܕܘ
ܡܚܕܝܗܘܢ ܚܝܝܢ ܕܟܠܢ ܒܐܠܗܐ: ܘܣܠܩ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܗܘܘ
ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܐܝܟ ܪܘܚܐ ܡܫܠܛܐ ܕܐܒܘܗܘܢ ܒܦܓܪܐ. ܡܛܠ
ܒܟܠܡܐ ܐܬܝܗܒ ܡܢ ܠܘܬܗܘܢ: ܘܢܗܘܐ ܒܐܠܗܐ. ܡܛܠ
ܗܢܐ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܢ: ܕܒܟܠܝܘܡ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܦܓܪܐ ܪ̈ܘܚܢܝܐ.
ܠܐ ܟܗܕܝܢ ܒܢܝܐ ܡܐܬܝ̈ܬܐ. ܒܪ ܡܢܬܗ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܒܡܫܝܚܐ
ܡܛܝܠܐ ܦܐܢܐ ܟܠܐ. ܘܡܛܘ ܠܡܛܘ ܠܡܕܝܢ ܒܡܫܘܒܚܐ
ܕܐܒܘܗܝ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܢܚܬܝܬܐ ⁘

5. ܪܘܚܐ ܢܫܡܬܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܡܐ ܒܣܒܘܬܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ: ܘܠܐ ܢܬܒܥܐ
ܙܘܥܐ ܐܝܢܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܗ. ܗܘܝ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܐ ܙܢܐ ܡܫܬܟܠܠ
ܙܐܪܐ ܕܪܘܚܐ ܠܘܬܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ: ܘܒܫܠܡܗ ܦܘܩܕܢܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܫܦܝܪܐ
ܡܟܬܒܢܐ. ܢܬܠܘܢ ܫܘܦܪܐ ܒܫܘܦܪܐ. ܘܒܢܝܢܐ ܒܒܢܝܢܐ. ܢܬܠܘܢ
ܗܢܝܘܬܐ ܒܗܢܝܘܬܐ. ܘܒܪܚܡܐ ܕܢܫܡܬܗܘܢ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܠܗܘܢ ܕܐܒ
ܐܢܘܢ ܒܪܚܡܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܗ ⁘

6. Their mind has gone out from the world which confuses the wise, and they have penetrated into the place of thick darkness, to the multi-splendored light where the divine light is concealed[13] from the sight of all the living. Here, at the door of the mysteries, they stand amazed together with the Most High Powers. There is no shadow in their place because their Sun does not set.[14] There is no cessation[15] of their food because they are sustained by God's sweetness. Oh, these dead in Christ[16] who have lived by tasting the Life which does not know death !
7. Now, therefore, with an inflamed heart I will praise You, our glorious and beloved God, who loves those who seek Him and glorifies those who praise Him. My Lord, I do not know how I will name You. May I call You "God"? You have said that You are without a name.[17] Therefore all titles and names are inferior to your greatness. How then will I name You with my images, for the joy of those who seek You? The revealed names which You have given for your praise, these are granted to everyone; but that hidden Name, which in your love You gave to me mysteriously that I might speak it with You in secret,[18] You have hidden from word and image. You have filled me with reverence, and I dare not declare it to my friends!

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[13] cf. Ex. 20:21; 24:15, 16.
[14] Rev. 22:5.
[15] A variant from ms H is used here, from the root *pâš*, instead of *pašeq*.
[16] cf. 1 Thess. 4:16.
[17] cf. Gen. 32:29; Ex. 3:14.
[18] cf. Mt. 6:6.

6. ܒܬܪ ܕܙܒܢܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܡܫܬܥܒܕܢܘܬܐ ܣܓܝܐܬܐ. ܘܥܒܕܘ
ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܡܨܪܝܢ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܦܪܘܩ ܥܡܐ܆ ܕܗܘ ܡܦܪܫ ܢܗܘܐ
ܠܐܠܗܐ ܡܢ ܚܪܬܐ ܘܡܢ ܟܠܗ ܚܪܬܐ. ܗܘܪܒܐ ܟܠܗ ܠܐܪܥܐ ܕܐܪܐ
ܦܢܝܢ ܒܟܠ ܫܢܝܢ ܕܘܒܪܐ ܕܝ ܐܬܚܘܝ. ܒܟܠܗ ܠܟܠ
ܒܐܬܪܘܗܝ܆ ܡܛܠ ܕܫܡܫܘܗܝ ܠܐ ܟܢܫ. ܒܟܠܗ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ܆ ܡܛܠ ܕܢܟܣܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܢ. ܐܦ
ܩܛܠܐ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ ܕܢܦܫܗ ܚܝܐ ܕܫܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܢܦܩ ܠܒܪܝܢ ܞ
7. ܡܛܠ ܕܒܫܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ
ܘܪܘܚܢܝܬܐ܆ ܙܢܝܢ ܒܒܢܘܗܝ ܘܡܦܪܫ ܡܫܝܚܘܬܗ. ܐܝܟܢܐ
ܐܬܚܫܒ ܡܕܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ. ܕܐܬܩܪܒ ܠܐܠܗܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܐܡܪܐ ܕܕܠܐ ܡܘܡ
ܐܠܗ. ܡܛܠ ܟܠ ܚܛܝܐ ܘܡܬܩܪܒܐ ܦܪܩܢ ܡܢ ܪܒܘܬܗ.
ܘܡܛܠ ܡܛܠ ܐܬܩܛܠ ܒܨܒܝܢܗ ܠܢܦܫܗ ܚܠܦܝܢ. ܡܩܕܫܐ
ܠܫܡܝܐ ܕܢܘܪܐ ܠܡܫܘܠܡܘܬܗ܆ ܒܗܘܢ ܟܠ ܒܪܢܫ ܡܦܣ.
ܘܗܘ ܕܐܬܚܙܝ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܢܘܚܡܐ ܠܗ ܒܫܡܝܐ܆ ܕܗܘ
ܒܟܠ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܐܦܠܐ܆ ܡܢ ܕܡܠܐ ܘܪܒܘܬܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܘܬܗ.
ܘܕܡܠܐܟ ܒܫܡܝܐ. ܘܠܐ ܡܬܦܪܫ ܐܢܐ ܕܒܫܪܝܐ ܐܦܝܣܩܘܦ ܞ

8. Glory to You, Father and Lord of my life, who have made me the link[19] of all creatures that in me all creatures might lift up your praise. Nothing is comparable to your love. Only worthy of your praise is that one who has exchanged everything, including his life, for your love. Your love makes the loved ones your sons. There is no one who has despised the world fully, except the one whom your fire burns within his heart. There is no one who sees your great glory within himself, except the one whose meditation is always on You. There is no one who hears continually in himself the mysteries of your Spirit, except the one whose soul is always speaking with You. There is no one wise in an understanding of You, except the one who has removed the wisdom of the world from his heart.[20]
9. Blessed is the one who bears your wonder in his heart at all times because he sees You in himself always. Blessed is the one who has acquired You as a treasure within his soul in this world, for he will take delight in You forever and ever. Blessed is the one who fixes his eyes on your dazzling glory in his soul, for his being shines with your beauty at all times. Blessed is the one in whose heart your Spirit speaks and grants his soul all its petitions.

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[19] Link (*essârâ*): man's role in the universe is to be a bond of love by his very nature—soul and body—"that the creation might not be bound to him by need alone, but also by kinship of nature." Quote of Theodore of Mopsuestia found in Norris, *Manhood and Christ*, 146–148. See also Sheʿmun the Graceful on man as the bond of all creation in Bettiolo, *Violenza e Grazia*, 47.

[20] cf. 1 Cor. 1:20; 3:19.

8. ܒܟ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܐܒܐ ܘܡܪܐ ܕܚܝܝܢ: ܕܫܡܫܬܗ ܐܫܪܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܒܪܝܟ.
ܕܟܠܐ ܒܪܝܟ ܒܗ ܢܫܦܩ ܠܡܫܘܚܬܟ. ܡܛܠ ܕܦܣܩ ܒܚܘܒܟ.
ܦܬܐ ܓܢ ܠܫܘܒܚܟ ܗܘ ܐܠܗܘܬܟ: ܐܝܟ ܕܟܠܐ ܒܟ ܚܝܘܗܝ
ܢܠܦ ܒܪܝܬܟ. ܪܒܝܬܟ ܒܒܪܝܬܐ ܩܢܝܐ ܕܝܠܟ ܓܒܪܐ
ܠܗܘܢ. ܡܛܠ ܕܢܛܪܘ ܠܒܠܒܝܬܐ ܡܟܝܠܬܐ: ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܢܗܘܪ
ܢܗܝܪܐ ܥܡܗ ܠܟܘܢ. ܡܛܠ ܕܢܚܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܪܒܐ ܠܥܡܗ ܡܢܗ:
ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܪܘܚܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܝ ܐܠܗܘܬܟ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܦܩܕܐ
ܙܥܝܪ ܪܘܚܢ ܒܐܠܗܘܬܗ: ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܫܟܠܠ ܕܢܦܫܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܟܫܝܪ ܗܘܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܢܒܣܡ ܒܒܪܝܬܟ: ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܫܡܝܬܐ
ܒܟܠܡܬܐ ܟܠܟܢ ܡܢ ܠܟܘܢ ❖

9. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܒܛܢܐ ܕܒܠܥܗ ܠܐܘܪܚ ܒܒܟܝܢ: ܕܗܘܐ ܒܗ
ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܢܗܪܐ ܠܟܝ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܦܡ ܕܡܢ ܗܪܟܐ ܡܢܝ ܠܟܘܢ
ܫܒܝܚܬܐ ܥܡܗ ܢܦܫܗ: ܕܒܝ ܡܬܓܫܡ ܠܟܠܟܡ ܠܟܠܝܢ.
ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܦܡ ܕܒܢܦܫܗ ܦܬܓܡ ܒܪܟܬܝ: ܕܒܫܘܦܪܝ
ܡܫܡܫܗ ܢܗܪ ܒܟܠܒܝ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܦܡ ܕܪܘܚܝ ܡܫܠܠ
ܥܡܗ ܠܟܘܢ: ܘܗܘܐ ܡܦܩܐ ܠܟܢ ܠܟܠܦܫܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܫܩܠܬܗ ❖

10. Whose intellect is in darkness without your light, let him compose a lamentation over his misery and I will bear his distress with him. O wise one, close your eyes to the world before the sun sets on your daily labor. For angels draw those who obey them to the inheritance of life, and when they have finished their course and the time draws near for their departure from here, the angels lead their souls away and join them to their troops. Thus they enjoy[21] the glory of God until the day of the resurrection of their bodies arrives, when God will become their delight. But those who have done the will of the impure demons, at the time of their going forth these demons will lead their souls to the fearful and terrible place of their inheritance. And thus in the blindness of ignorance, they will remain until the resurrection when they will come to judgment together with the rebellious demons.
11. Love everyone in separation from every man.[22] Hate all which is hateful in your self but not in others. Anyone who hates sinners is abhorrent to the Lord. While you have time, show penitence so as to blot out your sins. Pour forth tears before your Lord, lest He turn his face from you on the day when all who love Him await his glorious appearance, to take delight in Him forever. To Him be praise from the mouth of all the rational beings, and as for us, let us beseech his mercy! Amen.

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[21] Here John speaks of the joy of the soul after death, something condemned by Patriarch Timothy I who at the Synod in 786/787 denied any sense perception by the soul after death during the "sleep of the soul" (*hypnopsychia*). Timothy sided with earlier writers such as Aphrahat, Ephrem, and to some degree Narsai, who were less influenced by Origen and Evagrius than were the later mystical writers: Dadisho, Joseph Hazzaya, and John Dalyatha. On the relation of the soul to the body after death, see A. Guillaumont, "Sources de la Doctrine de Joseph Hazzaya," *OS* 3 (1958): 5–24, esp. 10–12. See also Beulay, ES, 488–510 which includes a complete translation of John's Discourse dedicated to the condition of the soul after death.

[22] As noted in Letter 18.42, see Evagrius, "Chapters on Prayer" # 124: "A monk is a man who is separated from all and who is in harmony with all." See Bamberger, *Evagrius*, 76. Also found in Isaac of Nineveh, Homily 65, see Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus*, 457.

10. ܡܛܠ ܕܫܡܥܢ ܗܘܝܢ ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܝ܆ ܢܦܩܬ ܥܡܟ ܛܒܐ ܟܠܐ
ܢܣܒܬܗ. ܘܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܥܡܟ ܐܘܕܝ ܒܪܘܚܐ. ܐܘ ܢܨܝܚܐ ܟܡܪ
ܒܬܪܝ ܡܢ ܒܒܠܝܐ܆ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܕܒܥܒܕ ܡܥܡܐ ܕܦܠܛܘܬܝ.
ܩܠܝܠܐ ܥܕܢ ܒܥܡܠܩܒܢܘܬܝ ܒܬܪܬܝܢ ܫܢܐ ܢܫܬܝ. ܘܗܫܐ
ܕܦܠܓܘܬ ܙܘܓܗܘܢ ܘܡܥܒܕ ܡܪܐ ܕܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܝ ܕܡܬܠ܆ ܕܒܢܝ ܕܟܪܝ
ܢܦܩܬܗܘܢ ܘܒܥܩܒܬܗܘܢ ܡܢܒܠܐܝ ܥܡܝ. ܘܗܘܒܠ
ܡܬܚܫܡܢ ܒܡܕܒܪܢܘ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ܆ ܥܕ ܦܠܐܝ ܢܘܡܐ ܕܢܘܚܡ
ܦܓܪܗܘܢ܆ ܕܒܗ ܒܠܒܗܘܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܘܚܡܬܗܘܢ. ܐܝܟܢ ܕܝܢ
ܕܦܓܥܘ ܒܗܡ ܙܒܢܐ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܐܠܗܐ܆ ܕܒܢܝ ܕܩܐ ܕܟܪܝ ܢܦܩܬܗܘܢ
ܒܐܒܠܐ ܘܡܣܩܢܘܬܗܘܢ܆ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܢܬܦܬܘܢ ܐܒܐ ܘܢܚܠܐ. ܘܗܘܒܠ
ܒܬܫܡܫܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܒܥܐ ܡܣܠܩܝ ܒܢܡܐ ܠܡܢܚܡܐ. ܕܢܦܘܩ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܥܕܪ ܕܢܠܐ ܒܥܡܗܘܢ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܡܬܪܘܕܐ ܀
11. ܙܢܝܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܪܫܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܒܪܢܫ. ܟܠܐ
ܫܒܝܬܐ ܒܢܦܫܝ ܗܘܘܠܐ ܦܫܐ ܥܡܝ. ܘܠܐ ܒܐܪܥܐ. ܦܫܥܒ
ܗܘ ܩܕܡ ܡܕܢܐ ܟܠܐ ܕܦܫܐ ܒܬܓܪܐ. ܥܕ ܐܝܟ ܐܢܐ ܥܡܝ ܐܬܪܐ ܦܪܒ
ܠܢܒܘܬܐ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܕܢܬܓܗܝ. ܐܫܦܥ ܕܩܕܡ ܩܕܡ ܡܕܝܢ܆ ܕܠܐ
ܢܗܦܟ ܐܩܦܘܗܝ ܡܢܝ. ܒܗܘܢܐ ܕܒܗ ܗܘ ܡܫܦܥ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܙܝܦܗܘܢ ܒܚܙܘܗ ܡܫܒܚܬܐ. ܕܒܗ ܢܬܦܫܡܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ.
ܕܒܗ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܡ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܩܒܠܐ܆ ܘܚܝ ܢܬܚܝ
ܒܪܫܡܬܗ ܐܡܝܢ ܀

LETTER 50

[On the remembrance and thought of God and a constant gazing on Him.]

1. My brother, concerning the thought of God which you asked me to write you about, I do not understand your request. If it concerns the constant remembrance of Him, I know that the thought of Him always arises in your heart for your delight and for the destruction of passions and thoughts.[1] And if you are seeking instructions about gazing on Him, I am sure that your understanding has been enlightened by the vision of his glory and has gone beyond all need of indications.
2. But since we are in the world of variations,[2] and now and then because of happenings, temptations, and acts of Providence to reprimand us, sometimes the remembrance of God is cut off from our heart, and our souls are deprived of his vision, and we forget to think about Him. So we have need of indications to bring us back to remembering God[3] and gazing on Him. According to my weakness, I am setting down notes for persons weak like me, that by them they might grow strong in the glory of God mighty forevermore.

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[1] Thoughts (*huššâbê*), the sense here is bad thoughts as in *logismoi* or distractions, see Guillaumont, "Démon," 201–203. Not to be confused with insights (*sukkâlê*) which arise in the mind while reading Scripture or during prayer, a term often used by Isaac, see Alfeyev, *Spiritual World of Isaac*, 229–236.

[2] Variations (*šuhlâpê*), see Letter 37.1.

[3] For John, remembrance of God (*ʿuhdânâ dalâhâ*) is a directing of the intellect (*hawnâ*) to God present in the heart. In his use of heart there is Macarian influence: a sense of the heart as the spiritual center of a person, including intelligence as well as feelings. It is the place where the Holy Spirit dwells and where one meets God. One must work hard to cultivate its "earth" (Letter 50.19) and to guard it carefully. Guarding is done by "remembrance of God," thus penetrating within and remaining motionless before the depth. John describes this at length in Discourse 20, "On the self-revelation of Christ," Vat. 124, 350a–351a. See Beulay, "Lettre XV," 278–279. See also S. P. Brock, "Spirituality of the Heart in Syriac Tradition," *Harp* 1 (1988): 93–115. Remembrance of God is also found frequently in the writings of Philoxenus. For him the soul is dead without the remembrance of God and one is no longer even able to hear the "cries" of the words of Scripture (Hom. 1:5). Many other references can be found in the Index. See Lemoine, *Philoxène*. However, he, like John the Solitary, is less interested in monastic life than John of Dalyatha and concentrates more on the simple life of faith of the baptized. Even his definitions of *ʿuhdânâ dalâhâ* tend to reflect this difference. But the tradition is the same.

ܒ

ܕܢܩܫܘܢ: ܥܠ ܥܘܗܕܢܐ ܘܪܕܝܐ ܕܬܠܡܝܕܘܬܐ. ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܐܡܝܢܐ ܕܒܗ.

1. ܥܠ ܪܕܝܐ ܕܬܠܡܝܕܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܠܡܕ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܬܠܡܕܘ ܥܡܢ: ܠܐ ܢܥܒܕ
ܐܢܐ ܙܢܐ ܕܥܒܕܢܢ. ܐܠܐ ܥܠ ܥܘܗܕܢܗ ܐܡܝܢܐ: ܢܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ
ܕܡܫܠܡܝܢ ܢܗܘܗ ܒܠܒܢ ܙܝܘܗ ܠܡܘܫܐܝܢ: ܘܡܬܛܘܟܣܐ
ܕܢܚܫܐ ܘܢܩܝܡܘܬܐ. ܐܘ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܟܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܒܗ.
ܡܦܩ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܬܚܙܝ ܡܕܡ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܡܘܗܒܬܗ: ܘܡܕܡ
ܠܐܝܟ ܡܢܗ ܥܠ ܐܢܫܝܢ ܀

2. ܐܠܐ ܡܛܠ ܕܒܥܠܡܐ ܕܡܩܢܝܢܐ ܐܢܢ: ܘܟܠܢ ܐܦ ܡܢ
ܚܕ̈ܕܐ ܘܢܫ̈ܡܬܐ ܘܦܓܪ̈ܐ ܠܡܘܗܒܐ: ܐܝܟ ܐܝܟ ܐܡܠܟ
ܕܡܬܦܫܩ ܡܢ ܠܟܢ ܥܘܗܕܢܐ ܕܠܗܐ ܘܢܩܡܐ ܢܫܡ ܡܢ
ܚܝܠܗ ܘܢܗܘܐ ܙܢܐ ܕܒܗ: ܫܩܝܠܝܢ ܥܠ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ: ܕܥܡܢ
ܠܥܘܗܕܢܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܒܗ ܠܡܩܝܢܐ. ܐܝܟ ܡܫܒܚܘܬܐ
ܦܐܝܫ ܐܢܐ ܢܕܥ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܐ: ܕܒܗܘܢ ܡܬܬܪܥܝܢ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ
ܠܫܘ̈ܬܐ ܒܡܘܗܒܬܗ ܕܥܠܝܢ ܟܠܗܘܢ܀

3. That heaven and earth and all that is in them are full of God; that He passes through all and that his Nature is stretched out through all the natures, like the sun in the air: many know this by hearing of it. Fewer know it from snatches in books, but only rarely is it known from the vision of purity: this purity which takes delight in blessing and not in senseless words.
4. Let a person look on the immensity of God which covers all and passes over all. This constant remembrance of Him is certainly a great thing: it destroys the passions, defeats the demons, enlightens the intellect, and purifies the heart. But better than this is that a person seek his Life within himself. All the worlds may be full of Life, but if he is empty of it, what profit from what is outside? And if he is full of Life, what harm can death do to him from the outside?
5. So then look at God within yourself, how *God is light*.[4] For his Nature is a glorious, many-splendored light. He manifests the light of his Nature to those who love Him in all the worlds—that is, his glory, not his Nature. And He changes the image of those who see it, to the likeness of his glory. Look within and see Him in your being, united to you as fire to iron within the furnace, and as moisture in your body.
6. When you see Him thus united to you, lay yourself bare before your understanding, so that He alone may be visible to it, if the power of its vision is capable. And if it is not able to do this, let it remain in continual remembrance: that is, that one's intellect be gathered to himself by the remembrance of God and his gaze be on Him. Our Fathers call this the guard of the intellect, and there is nothing more lofty than this among all the virtues and ministries.

[4] 1 Jn. 1:5.

3. ܕܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܘܐܪܟܐ ܘܟܠܠ ܕܒܗܘܢ: ܘܡܬܒܪ
ܒܟܠܠ ܘܦܫܝܛ ܒܢܘܗܝ ܒܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܢܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܡܫܡܫܐ ܒܐܬܪ:
ܠܡܫܬܘܬܐ ܕܝܗܒܐ ܡܢ ܓܡܝܪܐ. ܠܐܒܗܘܬܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܪ̈ܘܚܢܝܐ
ܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ. ܠܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܕܡܘܬܐ. ܗܕܐ ܒܛܘܒܐ
ܡܠܐܟܫܝܐ ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܡܠܐ ܕܢ̈ܬܟܢܫܘܢ ܡܢ ܛܟܣܐ ✧
4. ܕܝܢܘܪ ܐܝܟ ܒܠܐ ܡܫܬܒܚܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܕܒܟܝܢܗ ܒܟܠܠ ܘܡܟܪܙ
ܒܟܠܠ: ܛܒ ܪܒ ܗܘܐ ܒܡܘܕܥܐ ܠܐܡܝܢܘ. ܘܡܫܡܫ ܠܒ̈ܢܝܐ
ܘܦܫܛ ܠܩ̈ܬܪܐ: ܘܦܢܘܪ ܗܘܝܐ ܘܡܕܥܐ ܠܟܠܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ
ܗܘܐ: ܗܘ ܕܐܝܬ ܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܢܒܥܐ ܚ̈ܝܘܗܝ. ܢܗܘܐ ܕܡܒܟܝܢ ܒܟܠ
ܒ̈ܠܡܝܐ ܡܢ ܚܝܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܡܢܗܘܢ. ܡܢ ܕܟܠܟܪ: ܡܠܐ
ܗܝܕܐ. ܘܐܦ ܗܘܐ ܡܠܐ ܚܝܐ. ܦܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܟܠܟܪ ܡܠܐ ܦܪܐܐ ܠܗ ✧
5. ܡܕܝܢ ܒܡܝܘܡܢ ܢܗܘܪ ܒܐܠܗܐ. ܐܡܝܢܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܗܘ. ܘܗܘ ܗܘ
ܒ̈ܢܝ ܒܢܘܗܝ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܦܫܝܛ ܙ̈ܝܘܐ. ܘܢܗܘܪܐ
ܕܒܢܘܗܝ ܡܢܘܪ ܒܢ̈ܗܝܪܘܗܝ ܒܟܠܠ ܒܒܝ̈ܬܐ. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܢܘܗܝ.
ܦܘܠܘ ܕܝܢ ܡܘܒܠܗ. ܘܡܦܫܠܦ ܕܝܘܬܐ ܕܢܗ̈ܝܪܘܗܝ ܠܡܕܝܘܬܐ
ܕܡܘܒܠܗ. ܢܗܘܪ ܐܝܬ ܒܝ ܘܢܗܝܪܘܗܝ ܒܗ ܒܡܝܘܡܢ. ܡܢܗܝܪ
ܒܝ ܐܝܟ ܢܗܪܐ ܕܡܢܗܝܪܐ ܒܦܪܙܠܐ ܒܝܬܗ ܒܗܪܐ: ܘܐܝܟ ܪܛܒܘܬܐ
ܒܣܘܡܩܝ ✧
6. ܘܡܛܠ ܕܢܛܪ ܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܕܡܢܗܝܪ ܒܝ ܗܘܝܐ: ܢܦܠ ܠܡܝܘܡܢ ܡܢ
ܡܢܦ ܡܕܒܪ: ܕܗܘ ܠܝܘܡ ܕܢܐܕܐ ܠܡܕܒܪ: ܠܝ ܦܩܕ
ܢܥܠܗ ܢܗܘܪܐ. ܘܠܝ ܠܐ ܦܩܕ ܗܘܝܐ: ܢܦܐ ܒܒܗܘܝܐ ܐܡܝܢܐ.
ܗܘ ܦܘ ܕܒܝܬܗ ܗܘܝܗ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܗܠܗ: ܒܒܗܘܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ
ܘܢܗܘܪ ܕܒܗ: ܠܗܘܐ ܡܦܩܕܘܢ ܐܒܗ̈ܝܢ ܠܛܘܪܬܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ.
ܘܒܠܝ ܕܡܟܦܠܐ ܐܒܘܠܦ ܒܒܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܐܟ̈ܬܐ ܘܦ̈ܩܠܝܐ ✧

7. If you are inquiring about the vision of the glorious Hypostases, no creature is able to speak concerning this, even though the pure see each of Them in his limpid purity. Even if the visual power be found in them, in accordance with their own strength, there is not power in their natures to make this known by word. Nevertheless, we put forth scanty notes here, to enlighten those in the darkness like us.
8. Look at the perceptible sea from which our Fathers have given us many examples of comparisons to God, even though his Nature is above all comparisons, signs, and examples. Consider, so to speak, the Father of all as the nature of this perceptible sea, the Son more adorable than all as the moisture of the water, and the Spirit more glorious than all as the movement of the water in the sea.
9. Who can separate the powers of the sea from its nature, such that the water of the sea be without moisture and constant movement? Who is able to take the stirring of the sea from it and make it stand alone, or the water and the humidity likewise by themselves? Who will see one of these realities without the three which are one? When you see three, you see one, and when you see one, they are three with its powers: the powers are not separated from the nature, nor the nature from its powers.
10. Likewise, reflect on the glorious Nature of that noetic Sea of overflowing and multi-splendored light, and its extension in all and above all in an indescribable way. Think of the Father as the Nature, and the Son his understanding, and the Spirit the Life united to the Nature which is Life. And if the powers of the perceptible sea cannot be separated from it, and if none of them can be mentioned on its own, who is able to assert this about that glorious Nature of the Holy Trinity, thrice glorified.

7. ܘܐܢ ܥܠ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܡܬܘܡܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܫܐܠ ܐܢܬ܆ ܥܠ ܗܕܐ ܥܢܬ
ܥܒܝܕܐ ܕܦܛܪܘܣ ܕܐܡܪ. ܐܦ ܢܗܝܪ ܕܩܢܐ ܥܠܝܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܟܘܠܐ
ܕܟܘܬܗ ܡܪܟܠܬܐ. ܐܦ ܢܚܠܐ ܢܗܘܪܐ ܡܚܒܫ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܝܟ
ܢܚܠܗܘܢ܆ ܠܦܘܕܒܘ ܒܡܒܠܬܐ ܥܠܝܗ ܢܚܠܐ ܒܒܢܝܗܘܢ. ܒܪܡ
ܬܪܥܐ ܡܫܝܠܐ ܠܥܘܗܪܐ ܕܢܩܘܥܐ ܕܐܘܠܝ ܦܫܡܝܢ ܀

8. ܚܘܪ ܒܫܡܐ ܗܢܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ܆ ܕܒܗ ܕܩܝܡܐ ܥܠ ܐܠܗܐ ܢܗܘܒܢ
ܠܢ ܐܒܘܩܝ ܒܐܝܬܘܬܐ ܡܫܬܠܬܐ. ܐܦ ܪܡ ܒܪܗ ܡܢ ܕܘܩܝܐ
ܘܬܪܥܐ ܘܟܠ ܠܐܝܩܝ. ܚܘܪ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܡܐܡܪ ܒܐܒܐ ܕܟܠ܆ ܐܝܟ
ܕܒܪܗ ܕܫܡܐ ܗܢܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ. ܘܒܒܪܐ ܡܫܒܪ ܡܢ ܟܠ܆ ܐܝܟ
ܕܒܪܝܟܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܐ. ܘܒܪܘܚܐ ܡܚܒܫ ܡܢ ܟܠ܆ ܐܝܟ ܡܬܬܐܕܟܘܬܐ
ܕܡܬܐ ܕܒܫܡܐ܀

9. ܡܢܘ ܡܫܟܚ ܕܢܦܪܘܫ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ ܕܫܡܐ ܡܢ ܒܪܗ܆ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܒܗܘܘܢ
ܡܬܐ ܕܫܡܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܪܝܫܘܬܗܘܢ ܘܙܘܥܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܦܠܓܘܬܐ. ܐܦ ܡܢܘ
ܦܫܩ ܕܠܡܬܐܕܟܘܬܗ ܕܫܡܐ ܡܢܗ ܢܫܟܚ܆ ܘܢܫܬܘܕܥܝܘܗܝ
ܠܚܝܘܕܝܗ܆ ܘܠܡܬܐ ܘܦܪܝܫܘܬܐ ܠܚܝܘܕܝܗܘܢ. ܐܦ ܡܢܘ ܢܚܘܐ ܚܕ
ܡܢܗܘܢ ܡܢܗ ܘܠܗ ܕܠܐ ܠܥܠܡܗܘܢ ܕܚܕ ܐܢܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܠܥܠܡܐ
ܢܚܘܐ ܚܕ ܢܚܘܐ. ܘܟܕ ܚܕ ܢܚܘܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܐܢܘܢ ܠܟܠ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ. ܘܠܐ
ܡܬܦܪܫܝܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܒܪܐ ܘܠܐ ܒܪܐ ܡܢ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ ܀

10. ܗܟܢܐ ܪܒ ܥܠܠ ܒܪܢܐ ܡܚܒܠܐ ܕܗܘ ܫܡܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ ܕܢܗܘܪܐ
ܢܗܝܪܐ ܘܫܦܝܪ ܙܩܝܪܐ܆ ܘܦܫܝܛܘܬܗ ܕܟܠܠ ܘܟܠܠ ܡܢ ܟܠ
ܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܠܓܐ. ܕܐܢܬܘܢ ܐܒܐ ܒܪܢܐ ܘܒܪܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܪܘܚܐ ܚܝܠܐ
ܡܫܝܢ ܒܒܢܝܐ ܕܗܘ ܚܝܠܐ. ܘܐܢ ܚܝܠܘܗܝ ܕܫܡܐ ܗܢܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ
ܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܝܢ ܘܒܟܠܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܡܢܗ ܘܟܠܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܐܡܪ܆
ܥܠܠ ܗܘ ܒܪܢܐ ܡܚܒܠܐ ܕܠܥܠܡܘܬܐ ܩܕܡܐ ܕܠܥܠܡܐܝܬ
ܡܫܬܟܚ ܡܢܘ ܦܫܩ ܕܐܡܪ ܀

11. Who is able to talk about the adorable Persons, about each of them separate from the others? For while They are called Three, They are one, and while one, this One is thrice glorified. It is not possible to see One without the Three, nor to see the Three except as One: just as the perceptible sea is not seen or spoken of as one without three.
12. You are not able to say concerning the sea that it has powers other than these two (natural and spiritual). But if you were to say that there is a place where its water is sweet and another where it is bitter, observe also that God, while being good and sweet, deals vigorously with those who deserve punishment. And while his friends experience him as sweet and gentle, these who oppose him know him as bitter and punitive. Nevertheless these are operations and not powers. There are only two powers: of the spiritual sea and of the perceptible sea, these of which we have spoken.
13. Of the two, the perceptible sea possesses innumerable operations, such as the action of generating multiple natures, making them grow, and nourishing them. See how the adorable Majesty also has generated all the natures, making them grow, providing for them, and vivifying them, and will regenerate the rational beings in the likeness of his Glory.
14. The perceptible sea is life for natural beings: from it they drink and provide for all their needs; but it is also found to bring death to many. The spiritual Sea is Life and Vivifier of all, it is the light and stability of all the worlds and of all natures. Even so, the wicked in the world to come will consider it as deadly and dark; just as the sea for those who have not grown up in it, and fall into it, is found to be deadly and deprived of light. And as the sea offers riches, honor, and glory to the wise merchants who know how to navigate its waves; whereas those who do not know how to proceed in an orderly way strive until they fall into the abyss and touch its depths, gaining death and privation of light from it: so also it is of the spiritual Sea.

11. ܘܡܛܠ ܡܫܡܫ ܕܟܠܗ ܡܬܘܡܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ: ܟܠܗ ܟܠܚܕ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܡܢܗ ܘܟܠܗ ܢܦܠܚܐ. ܕܡܢ ܐ̈ܟܠܬܐ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܢ ܚܕ ܐܢܘܢ. ܘܟܕ ܚܕ ܗܘ ܠܟܠܬܐܝܬ ܡܫܬܡܠܐ. ܘܟܠܗ ܠܡܫܚܐ ܟܠܚܕ ܕܠܐ ܠܟܠܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܠܟܠܬܐ ܠܡܫܚܐ: ܐܠܐ ܠܝ ܚܕ. ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܓܐ ܐܘ ܡܬܦܪܫ ܡܢܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܢܐ ܚܕ ܘܠܐ ܠܟܠܬܐ ܀

12. ܘܠܐ ܡܫܡܫ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܐܡܪ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܦܫܝܛ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܠܬ̈ܪܝܢ. ܘܠܝ ܐܡܪ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܝܬ ܕܘܟܬܐ ܕܦܫܝܛܝܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ: ܘܐܝܬ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܡܪܟܒܝܢ: ܚܕ ܕܐܦ ܠܗܘܐ: ܡܢ ܠܒܪ ܘܦܫܝܛܐ ܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ: ܟܕ ܐܝܟܢ ܕܦܫܝܛ ܒܠܒܟܬܐ ܕܪܝܫܝܬܐ ܡܬܝܕܥ. ܘܟܕ ܡܪ̈ܟܒܘܗܝ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܦܫܝܛܐ ܕܠܒܝܢ ܠܗܘ: ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܡܘܬܐ ܡܪܝܪܐ ܘܡܦܝܢܐ ܢܒܥܝܢ ܠܗܘ. ܒܪܡ ܗܠܝܢ ܡܬܦܪܫܢܘܬܐ ܐܝܟ: ܘܟܠܗ ܚܝܠܐ. ܚܝܠܐ ܠܬ̈ܪܝܢ ܐܢܘܢ. ܕܡܬܪܟܒܝܢ ܘܡܬܦܪܫܢܐ ܒܟܝܢܗ ܗܢܘܢ ܕܐܡܪܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܀

13. ܡܬܦܪܫܢܘܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܟܝܢ ܕܐܬܪ̈ܘܗܝ ܒܠܐ ܡܟܐ ܡܬܦܪ̈ܫܢܐ. ܡܬܦܪܫܢܘܬܐ ܕܦܘܠܓ ܒܝܢܬ ܫܡ̈ܝܐ ܘܡܪ̈ܟܒܐ ܘܡܬܦܪ̈ܫܐ. ܚܕ ܕܐܦ ܪ̈ܒܘܬܐ ܫܡ̈ܝܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܟܠܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܝܢܬ ܘܡܪ̈ܟܒܐ ܘܡܬܦܪ̈ܫܐ ܘܦܫܝܛܐ. ܘܟܠܝܬܐ ܕܐܘܒ ܢܟܬܐ ܠܡܬܟܠܐ ܠܟܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܡܘܟܚܢܐ ܀

14. ܐܠܗܘܬ ܡܟܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܢܐ ܚܝܠܐ ܠܡܬܦܪ̈ܫܢܐ: ܘܡܛܠܗ ܦܠܓܝܢ ܘܡܬܦܪܫܝܢ ܒܟܠܗ ܚܝ̈ܠܘܗܝ. ܗܟܝܠ ܘܐܦ ܠܫܡ̈ܝܐ ܠܦܘܬܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ. ܐܠܗܘܬ ܡܟܐ ܡܬܝܕܥܐ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܦܐܝܫܐ ܕܟܠܗ. ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܫܘܡܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܬ̈ܟܠܡܐ ܘܚܝܠܐ. ܘܟܕ ܗܟܝܠ ܗܘ: ܒܬ̈ܪܝܢܐ ܒܟܠܟܠܐ ܟܠܝܬܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܘܚܕܘܟܐ ܡܫܬܟܚܢ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܡܟܐ ܠܐܝܟܢ ܕܟܗ ܠܐ ܐܬܪܟܝܗ ܘܢܦܟܢ ܟܗܘ: ܦܫܘܛܐ ܘܫܟܝܢ ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ. ܘܐܟܝܐ ܕܡܟܐ ܟܠܫܝ̈ܬܐ ܢܟܬܝܡܐ ܕܢܒܥܢ ܠܡܦܫܫ ܟܠܐ ܫ̈ܠܬܘܢ: ܦܟܠܪ ܘܦܘܪܟ ܘܡܦܟܚ. ܘܐܟܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܢܒܥܢ ܡܪܕܝܬܐ ܡܬܒܫܫܬܐ ܕܟܗܘ: ܘܡܬܚܪܝܢ ܠܡܫܦܠܐ ܟܗܘ̈ܩܘܡܘܗܝ ܠܡܫܫܗ ܠܬܘ̈ܗܡܘܗܝ: ܦܘܬܐ ܡܛܠ ܡܬܠܫܢܐ ܘܫܓܝܪܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ. ܗܟܝܠ ܐܦ ܡܟܐ ܡܬܝܕܥܐ ܀

15. Those who learn an orderly way, from the wise who ride the waves of its light, proceed on a straight course according to the indications which they have received, until also they become accustomed and have been instructed by the blessed Sea to search into the depths and to gain for themselves life without end and light which does not darken. For these it is found to be life, light, sweetness, and joy. It enriches them with that which is its own: glorifying, magnifying, and honoring them. It inclines to their supplication, and answers all which they ask. It makes them see its glory, and they exult. It gives them strength, and they conquer demons. It subjects creatures to them, and they obey their word. It shows them its ministers, and they take on their likeness by their crying "Holy," and they mix with their ranks and live forever and ever. They become sharers in its mysteries, knowing hidden realities. They are filled by its Spirit and search the depths of its wisdom.
16. But those who boldly wish to examine the eternal Nature of the Essence obtain their own destruction by their inquiry, and for their trouble they gain misery, bitterness, and groaning. Woe to the inquirer[5] and whoever listens to him! The one who examines inherits distress and separation from God. Humble your spirit, O inquirer, and do not cut your soul off from life. Do not fall into the Sea to your ruin, but arrange and measure your journey and gain eternal Life from it. Do not fall from the boat rigged by the wise, lest your drowning be immediate. You will not find a means of climbing out if you fall into the abyss without the boat or skiff which the wise have constructed. If by searching you are not able to understand your own composition in the womb and how you came to be in it, and if you are not able to know yourself, how do you dare search the Essence of the Nature of your Creator? Impious explorer, humble your pride lest you fall into the abyss where no prop is found to stop your descent.

[5] Inquirer (*bâsôyâ*), see Introduction.

15. ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܢܣܒܘܢ ܡܪܕܘܬܐ ܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܕܒܗ ܡܢ ܚܟܝܡܐ ܦܘܠܘܣ
ܫܠܝܚܐ ܢܘܗܪܗ: ܘܙܕܩ ܠܐܪܡܠܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܬܪܝܠܐ ܕܢܫܟܚܗ: ܒܪܡܐ
ܕܠܐܚܝܘܗܝ ܐܦ ܗܘܢܝ ܘܠܐܢܫܘܗܝ ܡܢܗ ܕܝܡܐ ܒܪܒܐ: ܠܡܬܒܥܐ
ܠܩܘܕܫܘܗܝ ܘܠܡܫܬܠܛܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܚܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܣܘܟܠܐ ܘܢܘܗܪܐ
ܕܠܐ ܢܣܒ. ܠܗܠܝܢ ܚܝܐ ܡܫܬܠܛܝܢ ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܒܘܣܡܐ ܘܚܕܘܬܐ.
ܘܦܠܓ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܚܝܠܗ: ܘܡܦܠܚܝܢ ܘܦܘܪܩ ܘܡܢܝܚ: ܘܡܬܪܘܡ
ܠܦܢܝܗܘܢ. ܘܡܦܠܐ ܟܠܠ ܕܢܠܒܫܘܢ. ܘܡܢܚܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܣܘܟܝܗ
ܘܙܕܩ. ܘܢܗܘܒ ܠܗܘܢ ܢܝܚܐ ܘܪܘܚܐ ܠܚܠܝܐ. ܘܡܦܠܓ ܠܗܘܢ
ܚܝܐ: ܘܡܫܬܡܠܝܢ ܠܡܫܠܡܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܢܚܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܩܝܡܘܬܗܘܢ.
ܘܦܠܓ ܕܡܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܦܪܫ ܒܩܕܝܫܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܡܬܢܟܦܝܢ
ܒܫܪܝܪܘܬܗܘܢ. ܘܢܗܘܐ ܠܚܝܠܐ ܠܚܝܠܝܢ. ܘܗܘܝܢ ܒܢܝ ܙܘܐܗܘܢ
ܘܬܪܝܢ ܒܫܘܠܡܗ. ܘܡܫܬܠܡܝܢ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܗ ܘܦܪܝܩ ܒܩܘܕܫܐ
ܚܕܬܘܬܗ ⁘
16. ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܫܬܢܝܢ ܙܒܢܝܢ ܕܒܥܘܗܝ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܒܢܝܗ ܕܠܐ ܣܘܦ: ܡܢ
ܒܙܒܢܝܗܘܢ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܠܡܫܬܘܬܗܘܢ ܡܬܬܠܛܪܝܢ. ܘܡܢ ܐܬܛܪܝܬܗܘܢ
ܘܢܐ ܘܡܪܘܪܐ ܘܐܘܠܨܢܐ ܠܟܠ. ܘܐܦ ܠܟܪܝܘܬܐ ܘܠܡܣܟܢܘܬܐ. ܗܘ ܕܟܪܐ
ܣܘܓܐ ܕܝܐ ܘܡܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܡܬܢܟܪܐ. ܦܠܚ ܪܘܚ ܟܪܝܘܬܐ: ܘܠܐ
ܐܫܬܘܝ ܢܣܒ ܡܢ ܚܝܐ. ܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܠܐܬܒܝܢ. ܐܠܐ ܢܦܫܗ
ܡܪܕܝܬܐ ܘܦܓܪܐ: ܘܡܢܐ ܡܢܗ ܚܝܐ ܕܠܥܠܡ. ܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܡܢ
ܐܠܗܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܚܟܝܡܐ: ܕܠܐ ܣܘܓܝ ܒܪ ܡܠܬܗ ܢܘܪܐ. ܠܐ
ܡܫܬܠܡܝܢ ܠܟ ܡܠܘܐܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ: ܐܦ ܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܒܬܠܬܘܡܐ ܕܠܐ
ܐܠܗܐ ܘܡܪܘܡܐ ܕܙܒܢܗ ܚܟܝܡܐ. ܐܦ ܙܘܒܢܝܢ ܕܒܪܢܫܐ ܠܐ ܦܫܩ
ܐܝܬ ܕܬܒܥܝܢ: ܘܕܐܝܟ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܗ ܐܦ ܐܚܪܢ: ܘܐܦ ܐܝܬ ܠܟ ܠܐ ܡܛܐ
ܐܝܬ ܕܬܒܥܐ: ܐܝܟܢܐ ܦܪܝܣ ܐܝܬ ܠܡܚܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܒܢܝܗ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ.
ܟܪܝܐ ܪܘܚܐ: ܦܠܚ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܒܬܠܬܘܡܐ ܕܒܗ ܦܬܓܡܐ
ܠܡܫܬܢܝܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܠܡ ⁘

17. O you who love God, wherever you see the wicked talking about investigating the Nature of the Essence, flee! Flee from there lest their clamor, which has killed those who hear it, fall on your ears. But carry the remembrance of Him in your heart, and you will be blessed. Look on Him in the wonder of his Majesty and you will not die.[6] Look in yourself and see Him within you. Fix your eyes in your heart, and from it He will shine forth over your soul. If you look there constantly, there you will find the Kingdom; that is, you will see God within you who is your Kingdom,[7] if you fix your eyes and if your heart is pure[8] from all blemish.
18. But if your heart is defiled by the passions of sin, whenever you look within yourself, darkness will block your vision. Nevertheless, by your constant gazing, your heart is made pure, day by day. And your intellect finds a support, even without seeing, and feels enjoyment and is at rest. No one fixes his eyes constantly within himself without acquiring in a short time God-seeing purity. The one who looks on God within himself, cleans his soul of dirt and the devil cannot sow passions in his heart. But if they are sown, they perish quickly; the remembrance of God and that of the passions cannot be found in the same dwelling.
19. The mind which seeks God in itself, its substance becomes a mirror[9] in which God becomes visible to it. Glory to that One who reveals his glory in the mind which is eager for the vision of Him, so as to be seen by it for its great rejoicing! For He does not come to it from elsewhere to become visible but was hidden and concealed in it. And when He sees that it toils and is worn out searching for Him and that it is ever thinking of Him and athirst for the vision of Him, He makes his glorious beauty to appear in it which was hidden in it, and comforts it. This is the one who has found the Kingdom which was concealed within him.[10] This is the treasure hidden in the field for which one who finds it immediately abandons all he possesses.[11] Behold one who has made the earth of his soul an excellent portion and it has yielded fruits from the good Plowman's seed, a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty![12] To Him be glory, forever and ever! Amen.

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[6] cf. Ex. 33:20.
[7] cf. Lk. 17:21.
[8] cf. Matt. 5:8.
[9] Mirror (*mazḥîtâ*).
[10] cf. Lk. 17:21.
[11] cf. Matt. 13:44.
[12] cf. Matt. 13:8.

17. ܐܘ̄ ܕܪܚܝܡ ܠܐܠܗܐ: ܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܝܬܝܐ ܬ̈ܝܒܐ ܕܡܫܬܠܛܝܢ ܒܒܪܝܬܐ ܕܟܠܗ̇
ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ. ܓܪܘܫܘ. ܓܪܘܫܘ ܡܢ ܠܟܘܢ: ܕܠܐ ܠܐܦܠܐ ܠܐܘܪܚ ܒܪܝܐ
ܡܠܟܘܢ ܦܫܛܬܗ ܡܫܩܠܝܢܘܬܗ. ܘܫܒܩ ܠܡܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܠܒܝ
ܘܫܒܩܝܢ. ܒܝܕ ܠܗ ܠܡܐܬܐ ܕܪܚܡܬܗ: ܘܠܐ ܡܠܐ ܐܝܬ. ܒܝܕ ܐܝܬ
ܠܟ ܘܒܪܘܚܗ ܠܟܝܢܗ ܡܫܝܚ. ܐܝܢ ܠܟܠܟ: ܘܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܝܚ ܠܟܠ
ܢܦܫ. ܐܢ ܒܝܕ ܒܠܡ ܠܡܫܝܚ: ܠܡܫ ܠܡܫܝܚ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ. ܗܘܝܘ
ܕܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܕܗܘܝܘ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܠܟܝܢܝ ܕܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ ܐܢ ܠܐܝܢ: ܐܝܬܘ
ܕܟܠܐ ܠܟܠܟ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܀
18. ܘܐܝܬܘ ܕܡܫܬܒܚ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܕܝܠܝܕܬܐ: ܟܠ ܐܡܠܟ ܕܐܝܬܝܗ ܠܟܝܢܗ
ܡܫܝܚ ܢܣܒܐ ܐܦܢ ܠܚܝܐ. ܒܪܡ ܕܝܢ ܒܝܢ ܢܘܗܪܝܢ ܐܡܝܢܐ: ܕܟܠ
ܠܟܠ ܝܘܡ ܡܢ ܝܘܡ. ܘܡܫܝܚ ܗܘܝܢ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܐܦ ܠܐ ܢܝܪܐ
ܘܡܬܬܗܝܐ ܘܡܬܐܢܝܚ. ܒܟܠ ܕܦܪܝܫ ܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܠܐܡܝܢܘ: ܕܟܠܗ
ܒܪܒܝܐ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܦܝܐ ܕܒܗܘܬܐ ܢܝܚܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܕܢܐܬܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܠܟܝܢܗ
ܡܫܝܚ: ܠܒܢܝܗ ܦܪܘܩ ܡܢ ܙܢܝܬܐ. ܘܡܠܐܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܢܫܡܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܠܐ
ܡܫܬܝܚ. ܘܐܢ ܡܕܪܫܝܢ: ܒܟܠܟܠ ܡܬܬܠܝܢ. ܒܗܘܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ
ܘܒܗܘܝܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܕܗܘܘܢ ܒܝܢ ܒܗܡܪܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܝܚܝܢ ܀
19. ܡܕܝܢܐ ܕܗܘ ܠܗ ܦܬܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ: ܗܘܐ ܡܣܟܣܗ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܐ: ܕܠܗ
ܡܠܐܟܐ ܠܗ ܐܠܗܐ. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܗܘ ܕܦܠܛ ܫܘܒܚܗ ܒܡܕܝܢܐ
ܕܠܗܘܢ ܠܚܝܐܘ: ܕܡܠܐܟܐ ܠܗ ܠܒܪܗ. ܠܗ ܢܚܬ ܡܢ ܕܘܟ
ܐܬܐ ܠܗ ܕܡܠܐܟܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܗ ܓܒܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܫܠܐ. ܘܡܠܐ ܕܒܪܗܘܢ
ܕܦܠܛ ܒܒܦܠܛܗ ܘܡܬܬܪܦ: ܘܐܡܝܢ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܘܐܣܐ ܠܚܝܐܘ:
ܦܪܘܩ ܠܗ ܫܘܦܪܗ ܫܒܝܐ ܕܒܗ ܓܒܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܡܦܠܐܐ ܠܗ.
ܘܗܘܐ ܕܐܡܝܢ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܠܟܝܢܗ ܡܫܝܚ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܐ ܗܘܐ. ܗܕܐ ܗܝ
ܫܒܝܠܬܐ ܡܫܬܡܠܝܬܐ ܕܒܫܪܝܬܐ: ܕܗܘ ܕܢܦܩ ܠܟܠ ܕܒܥܐ: ܗܘ ܗܘ
ܡܫܝܐ ܡܫܝܚ ܠܗܘ. ܗܘܝܘ ܕܒܝܬ ܠܐܪܥ ܢܦܫܗ ܡܢܝܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܬܐ:
ܘܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܗ ܦܐܪܐ ܕܠܒܗ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܕܒܝܐ: ܒܡܠܐ ܘܒܡܠܝܢ
ܘܠܟܠܟܝܢ. ܕܠܗ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܀

LETTER 51

[On the vision of God]

1. A brother told me: "Indeed when the remembrance of Paradise lifted up my soul to observe it, in the vision my soul became like Adam and was amazed. And again from there my soul was led by the power of the Spirit to marvel at the living and vivifying Paradise whose limit is unreachable and whose delight I find within me; then I was stunned by the diligent ascetics in whom is still found, while meditating on Paradise, an impulse arousing desire for a vision of that earth-bound paradise."
2. Blessed is he who fixes his eyes on You constantly, O my Paradise who appear to me within me! O Tree of Life, You inflame my heart every moment with the desire for You,[1] and change my countenance by the power of your love, holding my intellect in astonishment at the rays of your beauty. Blessed is that one who seeks You in himself always: for from Himself, Life flows for him[2] for his delight. Blessed is the one who carries in his heart the remembrance of You at all times, for also his soul is inebriated with your sweetness! Blessed is he who gazes upon You continually within himself, for his heart is enlightened so as to see hidden things. Blessed is the one who seeks You in his being, for his own heart grows warm with your fire, and his flesh with his bones burns in its purifying fervor.

[1] The text here has 3rd person sing., whereas I have used a 2nd person sing. to translate: desire for him/you; power of his/your love; rays of his/your beauty.

[2] cf. Jn. 7:38.

ܥܠ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܫܒܬܐ.

1. ܐܚܐ ܚܕ ܐܡܪ ܠܝ. ܟܕ ܣܥܪ ܒܥܘܡܪܐ ܕܦܪܝܫܘܬܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܘ
ܠܗܘܢ ܠܡܫܬܟܚܘ ܒܗ: ܘܒܚܙܬܐ ܗܘܬ ܒܕܡܘܬ ܐܝܟ
ܘܐܬܐܡܪ: ܘܚܙܝܬ ܡܢ ܬܡܢ ܒܢܝܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܐܬܝܢ ܠܡܫܬܡܠܗܘܢ
ܒܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܚܕܐ ܘܡܬܐܚܕܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܕܪܟ: ܕܟܠܗ ܡܢܗ
ܡܫܝܚ ܠܗ ܒܬܫܡܫܬܗ: ܐܬܐܡܪܬ ܠܗ ܒܦܠܚܘܬܐ ܒܫܪܪܐ ܕܟܠܗ
ܦܪܨܘܦܗ: ܕܒܟܠܗ ܡܫܝܚ ܒܗܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܦܪܨܘܦܐ
ܠܚܙܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܡܫܒܚ ܒܟܠܝܬܐ܀

2. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܒܪܢܫ ܗܘ ܒܐܝܕܘܗܝ ܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܕܗܢܐ ܕܗܘ ܟܢ
ܡܬܐܡܪܐ: ܘܐܝܟ ܚܝܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܒܪܝܟܬܗ ܦܪܨܘܦ
ܠܟ: ܘܡܫܡܠܝܐ ܐܦ ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܗ: ܘܡܬܝܕܥ ܗܘܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܕܐܝܟܢ ܡܫܬܦܪܝܢ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܚܙܐ ܠܟ
ܒܟܠܗ: ܕܡܢܗ ܙܕܩ ܠܗ ܚܝܐ ܠܡܫܬܘܕܥܘ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ
ܠܕܝܢܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܒܗܘܕܝܐ ܒܟܠܝܬܐ: ܕܕܝܠܗ ܐܦ ܙܘܥܐ
ܢܦܫܗ ܒܫܠܘܬܐ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܒܪܢܫ ܗܘ ܒܐܝܕܘܗܝ ܟܠܗ
ܡܢܗ: ܕܕܝܠܗ ܐܦ ܢܘܪ ܠܟܠܗ ܠܡܚܝܐ ܒܩܢܝܬܐ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ
ܠܒܥܠܐ ܠܟ ܒܫܘܡܠܝܗ: ܕܐܦ ܕܝܠܗ ܢܐܡ ܠܟܠܗ ܒܥܘܡܪ:
ܘܢܡܪ ܒܫܪܪܐ ܒܟܠ ܒܝܫܬܐ ܡܕܒܪܐ ܀

3. Blessed is the one whose thoughts are silenced by reflection on You, for the Spirit pours forth streams of Life on him for his own delight and for those who thirst for the vision of You. Blessed is the one whose cheeks are burning with the tears of your love, for by its drops the rational lands which burn with wicked fire are moistened so that they might produce fruits of joy which those who consume them do not die! Blessed is the one who mixes care about You with his sleep, for the demons who defile the lazy with foul images depart quaking from him. Blessed is the one who makes his bed in the incessant admiration of your mysteries and dwells silently in it in the wonder they produce, for to gladden the heart of the diligent it also gives forth the Fragrance of Life[3] produced by your Holy Spirit, Guardian of the purity of those who love Him. Blessed is the one who forgets about worldly converse to speak with You, for all his needs are filled by You.
4. You are his food and drink; You are his joy and his exultation. You are his garment, in your glory his nakedness is clothed.[4] You are his dwelling and his resting place, and he always goes within You to be protected. You are his sun and his day, and in your light he sees hidden mysteries. You are the father who generated him, and like a child he calls You: *Father*![5] You placed the Spirit of your Son in his heart,[6] and He[7] gave him the confidence to ask of You[8] all which is yours, as a son to his father. He is always in your company, because apart from You he knows no father.

[3] Fragrance of Life (*rîḥâʾd-ḥayeʾ*).

[4] cf. 2 Cor. 5:3. See Brock, "Robe of Glory."

[5] Rom. 8:15.

[6] cf. Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:22.

[7] The pronoun here is feminine; for a discussion of gender issues concerning Spirit (*rûḥâ*), see below note # 18.

[8] cf. 1 Jn. 5:14.

3. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܗܘ ܕܝܘܩܢܗܘܢ ܒܪܘܚ ܡܨܛܠܡܝܢ: ܕܒܗ
ܡܦܠܚ ܪܘܚܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܠܡܥܡܘܕܝܗܘܢ: ܕܠܗܘ ܘܐܠܒܫܘ
ܕܪܕܝܢ ܠܚܝܠܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܝܕܗ ܦܘܡܗܘܢ ܕܡܦܠܐ
ܘܪܚܡܬܐ: ܕܒܬܫܡܫܬܗܘܢ ܡܬܬܩܢܝܢ ܐܪܥܢܝܬܐ ܫܡܝܢܝܬܐ
ܕܩܕܡ ܒܥܘܪܐ ܠܦܠܚܬܐ: ܘܠܐܚܪ ܦܐܪܐ ܕܚܕܘܬܐ ܕܐܬܦܠܚܘܢ
ܠܐ ܦܠܚܝܢ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܣܒܪܘ ܠܡܢܬܗ ܒܡܪܢܝܬܐ:
ܕܒܪܘܟܐ ܡܦܬܚ ܡܢ ܕܝܕܗܘܢ ܬܪܥܐ ܡܦܬܚܝܢ ܢܟܝܠܐ
ܒܦܐܛܐܦܣܝܣ ܕܡܘܩܒܠܬܐ. ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܦܘܫܗ ܠܬܫܡܫܬܗ
ܒܕܘܡܪܐ ܕܒܐܪܝܢ ܟܠ ܥܒܕܐ. ܘܥܒܕܗ ܒܗ ܠܬܗܘܪܐ
ܕܒܗܘܢ. ܘܐܦ ܡܢܗ ܦܐܫ ܪܘܚ ܚܝܐ ܠܚܕܘܬܐ ܠܒܗ ܕܡܪܢܐ:
ܘܡܬܛܠܒܝܢ ܡܢ ܪܘܚ ܩܘܕܫܐ: ܢܛܘܪܐ ܕܕܒܘܬܐ ܕܪܥܝܢܗܘܢ.
ܛܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܠܕܝܬܒܐ ܒܒܝܬܐ ܠܠܚܘܕ ܒܫܦܝܪܐ ܕܡܢܢ: ܕܡܫܝܚ
ܟܠ ܫܘܬܦܘܬܗܘܢ ܡܬܦܠܚܝܢ ❖

4. ܐܢܬ ܗܘ ܐܒܘܢ ܘܡܠܟܢ. ܐܢܬ ܗܘ ܚܝܠܢ ܘܬܘܪܢ. ܐܢܬ ܗܘ
ܐܡܝܢܘܬܢ: ܘܫܘܒܚܢ ܒܪܬܘܟܠܢ ܡܫܝܟܢܐ. ܐܢܬ ܗܘ
ܡܩܪܒܢ ܘܫܘܡܠܝܢ ܕܢܚܬܢ: ܘܠܟ ܫܠܡܐ ܒܥܠܡܝܢ ܕܫܠܬܐ.
ܐܢܬ ܗܘ ܫܡܫܢ ܘܐܣܝܢ: ܘܒܢܘܗܪܟ ܚܙܐ ܒܣܘܟܐ. ܐܢܬ ܗܘ
ܐܒܐ ܢܛܘܪܢ: ܘܠܟ ܐܒܐ ܡܫܝܢ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܠܒܢ. ܐܢܬ
ܚܘܒܐ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܒܪܬ ܒܠܒܢ: ܘܗܘ ܚܘܒܐ ܠܗ ܦܐܪܘܫܘܬܐ
ܠܡܫܝܚ ܡܢ ܟܠܐ ܕܠܟ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܒܪܐ ܡܢ ܐܒܘܗܝ. ܒܡܢ
ܗܘ ܒܢܝܢ ܒܟܠܟܝܢ: ܒ ܠܐ ܢܥܠ ܐܒܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢ ❖

5. You are united to his soul; You are mingled with his members; You shine in his intellect and take it captive to make him marvel at the vision of You. You silence the stirrings of his soul by the movement of your love and You transform his carnal desire by your great sweetness.[9] He smells your holy fragrance, as a child breathes the scent of his father. The fragrance of your grace exudes from his body, as the scent of his wet-nurse from a child. You always console him with the vision of Yourself; when he eats, he sees You in his food; when he drinks, You sparkle in his drink; when he weeps, You appear in his tears. Wherever he looks, he sees You there: so that everywhere You increase his bliss, and there is no one who does not call him blessed, except the one who is utterly deprived of blessing.
6. My Lord and my Life, fellowship with You has captivated my mind because besides You I have no companion. What will I do? My soul thirsts for You and my flesh seeks You.[10] However, an ascent to You is found in conversing with You, and a vision of your countenance is given through meditating on You.

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[9] Rather than a suppression of passions in the Evagrian way, John sees a transformation (*šuhlâpâ*) which explains perhaps why the technical term for *apatheia*/*lâ hâšôšûtâ* occurs only once in his writings. In this emphasis on transformation, John is closer to Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius than to Evagrius; see Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 46. Beulay considers transformation to be a defining theme throughout John's writings. See the opening prayer of his Discourse 3: "O Glorious Splendor sprung forth to us from the bosom of the Father, who by thy desirable beauty dost draw the desire of those who love thee away from all else unto thyself, come to the aid of thy weak servants in their time of conflict and change the impulses of desire that are in them to desire for thee, Amen." Discourse 3, Vat. 124, 284a. For a similar pattern of transformation in Sheʿmon the Graceful, see Bettiolo, *Violenza e Grazia*, 163–164.

[10] cf. Ps. 63:1.

5. ܡܢܝܚ ܐܢܬ ܒܢܦܫܗ. ܚܒܝܛ ܐܢܬ ܒܗܕ̈ܡܘܗܝ. ܝܚܝܕ ܐܢܬ
ܒܗܘܢܗ: ܘܩܒܠ ܐܢܬ ܠܗ ܠܡܠܬܗ ܒܚܙܬܟ. ܡܦܠܬ ܐܢܬ
ܙܘ̈ܟܝܢ ܢܦܫܗ ܒܪܘܚܗ ܕܪܚܡܬܟ. ܘܒܪܓܠ ܐܢܬ ܦܓܪܗ
ܡܦܝܣܦ ܐܢܬ ܒܪܚܡܐ ܚܒܘܠܟ. ܘܡܪܝܚ ܕܝܚܟ ܡܕܝܠܐ ܐܝܟ
ܒܠܚܘܕܐ ܕܫܠܡ ܕܢܚ ܢܠܚܘܕܗ. ܦܐܝܚ ܕܢܚ ܠܚܒܘܬܟ ܡܢ
ܦܓܪܗ: ܐܝܟ ܕܡܢ ܒܠܚܘܕܐ ܕܢܚܠ ܕܡܪܒܝܢܘܬܗ. ܒܠܗܘܢ ܡܟܝܠܐ
ܐܢܬ ܠܗ ܒܚܙܬܟ. ܟܕ ܐܟܠܐ: ܠܐܘܒܠܗ ܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ. ܘܟܕ ܦܠܐ
ܒܦܘܡܗ ܪܡܚ ܐܢܬ. ܟܕ ܟܠܐ ܒܦܘ̈ܡܘܗܝ ܕܢܚ ܐܢܬ. ܠܟܠܐ
ܒܪ ܕܚܘܪ ܠܐܡ ܢܗܪܐ ܠܟ. ܕܡܢ ܒܟܝܢܟ ܛܘ̈ܒܐ ܐܬܦܓܠ ܠܗ.
ܘܟܢܬ ܡܢ ܕܠܗ ܛܘܒܐ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ: ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܓܡܪ ܣܓܝܕ
ܗܘ ܡܢ ܛܘܒܐ ܀
6. ܡܪܝ ܘܚܒܝܒܝ: ܐܫܬܠܡܬ ܠܗ ܪܚܝܢ ܠܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܒܡܟ ܟܕ
ܒܢܬ ܠܢ ܒܪ ܒܢܝܢܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢܟ. ܡܢܐ ܐܒܕܟ: ܪܗܛܐ ܗܘ
ܠܟ ܢܦܫܝ. ܘܟܠܐ ܠܟ ܒܡܪܝ. ܐܠܐ ܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܚܘܒܟ.
ܒܚܢܢܟ ܡܫܬܐܒܐ. ܚܙܝܐ ܕܦܪܨܘܦܟ ܒܗܘܓܝܟ ܡܬܒܗܘܠܐ ܀

7. My hand cannot describe your mysteries in figures. As a self-assured sage, I apply myself to write, and at the end the images show me to be a wretch, not knowing anything! Therefore I will draw near to You and I will take delight, because I have not been able to impart your delight to others with the pen. But *who therefore will ascend your holy mountain*[11] to behold your glorious beauty, O Light, overflowing with many reflections of marvelous beauty, astonishing those who see it? It reduces to silence those who know it because its Form has no form,[12] putting those who are eager for its vision in a state of imperceptible wonder. Here are removed the understanding of the learned and the vision of the seers, by the magnitude of the understanding and the marvelousness of the true vision.
8. And because the vision is not able to expand in the light, driven back by its powerful reflections, they say that You are clouds and thick darkness,[13] and that *luminous clouds surround*[14] You and block the sight of those who love You from gazing in a disorderly way, seeking to see your hidden Nature. They also call You Sea: source of all the worlds and sustainer of all that is, enclosing and concealing all in the abyss of its greatness and offering ease to swimmers, allowing lightweights to float on its waves to cleanse their beauty. They also call You Air, inspiration of all Life, and Breath: they come and go within You without their way being hindered; while it is not as if they penetrate and pass through You like the air, but You are stretched out in them without hindrance, they move around in You, back and forth, unhindered in your expansion in them.
9. They also compare You to fire,[15] because it yields without diminishment, and it cleans but does not sully itself. And while everyone wherever he is finds it partially, for everyone it is also there entirely with the power of all its nature: one fills all one's needs from it, and if one stokes it well, the fire shows the intensity of the full effect with all its might.

[11] cf. Ps. 24:3.

[12] Refers to the light without form (*nuhrâ dlâ dmû*). This Evagrian concept is found in John's Discourse 6, V.296a where it is identified with the Holy Trinity. See Beulay, ES, 393–95.

[13] Pseudo-Dionysius, *Theol. Mys.*, I, 3; II, 1.

[14] Ps. 97:2.

[15] cf. Pseudo-Dionysius, *Celest. Hier.*, 15:2.

7. ܠܐ ܦܫܝܩܐ ܡܠܝܢ ܠܡܦܪܫ ܕܐܝܟ ܒܪ̈ܘܚܐ. ܐܝܟ ܢܒܝܗܐ ܠܠܒܝܒܐ
ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘ ܦܪܝ ܐܠܐ: ܘܐܝܟ ܫܠܐ ܘܠܐ ܢܕܥ ܡܕܡ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܡܫܬܡܥ
ܠܗ ܕܒܪ̈ܘܬܐ. ܐܡܪܝ ܡܬܡܠܠ ܠܘܬܟ ܘܐܬܒܣܡ. ܒܠܐ ܐܡܫܝܚܐ
ܕܠܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܒܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܠܐ ܒܘܫܡܝ. ܘܥܒܕܗ ܡܬܡܠܠ ܕܫܡ ܠܡܛܘܪ
ܡܕܡܐ: ܠܡܣܪ ܒܡܘܦܪܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ. ܗܘܐ ܗܫܐ ܦܫܝܛ ܙ̈ܩܝܪܐ
ܠܗܘܢ ܡܘܦܪ̈ܐ: ܘܡܬܟܠܗܘܢ ܠܚܒܪ̈ܝܗܘܢ: ܡܬܦܠܛ ܬܪ̈ܝܢܗܘܢ
ܕܒܪܝܬܗܘܢ ܠܗܝܢ ܕܝܗܘ: ܡܫܝܚ ܥܠܐ ܦܫܝܛܐܝܬ ܠܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܕܠܚܒܪܬܗ
ܡܬܢܦܠܝܢ. ܗܪܟܐ ܡܫܬܠܡܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܢܘ̈ܪܒܐ ܘܚܝܠܐ ܕܬܪܝܢ: ܡܢ
ܪ̈ܒܘܬܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܘܬܒܪܝܬܐ ܚܪܬܐ ܡܪ̈ܝܬܐ ❖

8. ܘܡܬܠܠ ܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܚܪܬܐ ܕܐܬܦܫܛ ܠܐ ܡܬܒܥܝܐ: ܕܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܡܢ
ܙ̈ܡܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܝܘܡܐ: ܒܪ̈ܦܐܐ ܘܒܡܬܠܐ ܐܡܪܝܢ ܠܟ. ܘܒܥܠܬܐ ܗܘܪ̈ܝܐ
ܕܒܪ̈ܝܢ ܠܟ: ܘܐܦܫܩ ܚܪܬܐ ܕܡܬܚܟܡܝܢ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܠܐ
ܡܬܒܥܐܬܐ ܠܡܫܚܐ ܠܒܢܝܢ ܫܦܝܪܐ. ܘܢܣܒܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܦܫܩܝܢ
ܠܟ. ܦܫܘܛܐ ܕܒܠܐ ܬܒܠܒܐ: ܘܡܬܬܪܫܝܢܐ ܕܒܠܐ ܕܘܟܐ. ܢܒܥ
ܒܠܐ ܒܬܗܘܡܐ ܕܪ̈ܒܘܬܗ ܘܡܫܦܠܐ. ܘܢܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ
ܠܫܒ̈ܝܠܐ: ܘܦܫܘܫ ܠܩ̈ܒܠܠܐ ܠܡܬܗܫ ܒܫ̈ܠܝܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܕܘܒܪܐ
ܕܡܘܦܪ̈ܝܗܘܢ. ܘܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܡܦܫܩ ܠܟ: ܘܦܫܘܫܐ ܕܒܝ̈ܬܐ ܕܒܠܐ.
ܘܢܡܬܐ. ܐܪ̈ܚܢ ܘܐܢܝ ܒܫܘܩ. ܘܠܐ ܡܬܦܟܪܐ ܗܠܒܬܗܘܢ. ܒܝ
ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐܪ ܦܪܚܢ ܠܟ ܘܦܟܪܝܢ: ܐܠܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܦܫܝܛ ܐܝܟ
ܕܠܐ ܒܟܪܝܢ. ܘܡܬܗܦܟܝܢ ܒܟ ܠܟܠܐ ܘܟܠܐ ܒܦܫܝܛܘܬܟ
ܕܒܗܘܢ ܕܠܐ ܒܗܦܟ ❖

9. ܘܐܦ ܒܗܘܪܐ ܡܕܦܫܩ ܠܟ: ܒܗܦ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܘܠܐ ܢܫܦܪܐ. ܘܦܪ̈ܝܫܐ ܘܠܐ
ܡܬܦܠܝܢ. ܘܦܪ ܠܟܠܚܘܫ ܒܠܠ ܒܪ ܕܐܬܠܗܘܢ ܒܡܢܝܬܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ.
ܠܟܠܠ ܐܝܟ ܒܠܗ ܐܬܝܗ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܒܠܗ ܒܪܝܗ. ܘܡܫܝܗ ܡܦܠܠ
ܒܠܠ ܗܘܝܘܗܘܢ. ܘܐܝ ܢܛܠܠ ܠܗ ܡܬܠܘܬܐ ܗܘܝܐ: ܡܢܝܘܬܐ
ܠܘܩܒܠ ܕܡܬܒܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܒܠܗ ܢܣܒܗ ܒܒܝܬܗ ❖

10. Thus it is, O Good One, that You are in all those who love You: You are present to them in ineffable wonder, in the glory of the splendor of your Beauty, in the strength of your Nature, in the understanding of You, more sublime than all. And by all who love You, You are completely found with all that is yours; in each of them You are wholly part of him without diminishment, while no one is able to possess[16] You totally.[17] Glory to the Totality which contains all totalities while not being limited by them!
11. You are also the Father of rational beings born of your Spirit: your Spirit is described as "Birthgiver," in the feminine,[18] in that He has generated all to this world so that they might be bearers of sons to their world. But He is the Begetter, in that He is going to engender to his living world, the rational beings who will no longer generate.[19] And just as a mother nourishes her children and they grow strong from her, so those born of your Spirit suck Life at your bosom in the world without end.
12. But as children resemble their begetter, so the sons which are of your Spirit are transformed into your likeness, not by nature but by glory. And you make co-heirs of your Son[20] those who have remained in your inheritance. O Omnipotent One, Father of all who have made wise our ignorance by the wisdom of your mysteries, to You be glory forever and ever! Amen.

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[16] Here a variant from ms B and from the Arabic version is used for the verb possess, as indicated by Beulay.

[17] On the use and repetition of all (*kul*), see P. J. Botha, "The Theology of Totality: Ephrem the Syrian's Use of the Particle *kul* (all)," *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993): 223–28.

[18] cf. Gen. 3:20. Here John refers to the fact that *rûhâ* is grammatically feminine in Syriac. Whether this affected how John thought about the role of the Spirit is not in evidence. See also Letters 49.11 and 51.4. See S. P. Brock, "The Holy Spirit as Feminine in Early Syriac Literature," *After Eve*, ed. Janet Martin Soskice (London: Collins/Marshall Pickering, 1990), 73–88. And see Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "Feminine Imagery for the Divine: the Holy Spirit, the Odes of Solomon, and Early Syriac Tradition," *SVTQ* 37 (1993): 111–139.

[19] cf. Lk. 20:35–36; Evag. Cent. I, 5; II, 50; V, 89.

[20] cf. Rom. 8:17.

10. ܗܟܢܐ ܐܠܗܝ ܛܿܒܐ ܒܟܠ ܙ̈ܢܝܢ: ܕܡܛܝܒ ܐܢܬ ܠܗܘܢ
ܒܠܗܘܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܡܿܠܠ. ܒܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܦܐܝܘܬܐ ܫܘܼܦܪܝ.
ܒܢܨܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܚܢܢܝ. ܒܝܕܥܬܝ ܪܡܿܙܬ ܡܫܟܠܠ. ܘܡܟܠܠ
ܙ̈ܢܝܢ ܒܟܠܝ ܡܛܝܒ ܐܢܬ ܒܟܠ ܕܝܠܝ. ܘܐܠܗܝ ܠܗ ܒܗ
ܡܫܡܫܢܝܬ. ܒܟܠܝ ܒܒܟܠܝܢ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܚܠܐ ܢܫܬܪܘ. ܒܗ ܟܠ
ܠܟܠܟܝ ܠܐ ܫܦܩ. ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܫܡܟܝ ܕܐܝܬܝ ܟܠܐ ܫܩܝܢ:
ܘܒܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܿܐܠܝ ܀

11. ܘܐܠܗܝ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܕܒ̈ܟܠܐ ܬܟܠܝܒ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܝ. ܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܕܝܢ
ܪܘܚܝ ܢܟܝܬܐ ܕܡܫܬܐܠܬ: ܕܗܘ ܕܐܝܟ ܟܠܐ ܠܥܠܡܝܬܐ ܗܢܐ:
ܕܒܗܘܢ ܢܟܝܢ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܠܥܠܡܝܬܗܘܢ. ܢܟܘܪܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܠܗܘܬܐ:
ܕܗܘ ܕܟܠܝܢ ܘܢܟܠܝܢ ܠܥܠܡܝܬܗ ܚܝܠܐ ܠܚ̈ܟܠܠ ܕܐܘܒ ܠܐ
ܢܟܝܢ. ܘܐܝܢܐ ܕܢܟܝܬܐ ܡܢܗ ܡܬܐܪܫܝܢ ܬܟܝܢܗ
ܘܡܬܐܪܫܝܢ: ܗܟܢܐ ܬܟܠܝܒ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܝ ܢܟܝܢ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܡܢ ܒܕܟܝ
ܒܥܠܡܝܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܫܘܦܠܐ ܀

12. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܕܒܪܝܢ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܠܢܟܠܕܗܘܢ: ܗܟܢܐ ܡܬܐܚܕܝܢ
ܠܕܒܪܬܝ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܕܡܢ ܪܘܚܝ. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܐܠܐ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ.
ܘܟܠܗܘܢ ܒ̈ܢܝ ܬܪܥܘܬܗ ܕܒܢܝ ܚܕܒ ܐܢܬ: ܐܝܟܢ ܕܒܝܫܝܢ
ܦܘܡܗ ܒܢܪܥܘܬܝ. ܟܕ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܐܝܕܝ ܟܠܐ. ܐܢܐ ܕܟܠܐ.
ܕܢܫܡܫ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܟ ܒܫܘܒܚܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ
ܐܡܝܢ ܀

13. What is this wonderful thing, that this Unique One, this Solitary One, wants to appear on his own to those who love Him, so that they greatly increase his delight! It is much preferred by Him, as I learned from Him, that those who look on his beauty keep themselves far from the vision of his image,[21] so that to the purification of the mirror of their person be joined the clarity of the vision of his face. Indeed, it is not for the minds who behold God to examine his image with desire and not feel awe at gazing on Him, freely—provided they do not gaze boldly, since it is only fitting for holy things to be seen obscurely by the saints, in concord.
14. As to the profane and the disorderly, let them depict fantasies on the curtain of the mysteries. You go in, pray in your inner room, being hidden from the view of on-lookers,[22] and you will see your hidden Father there, the reward of your prayer.[23] From whomever sees your prayer, you will receive your reward;[24] before whomever you make known your works, from him you may also seek gifts for yourself.
15. Only one thing pleases the Lord of all: that the heart be clear of every blemish. And who is able to do this in the company of many people? Because the greater the number, the more things are thrust on him: dreadful things, which strip and clothe with shame, which are pleasing yet pollute, which are beautiful yet disfigure. Blessed is the sense of hearing which is closed to all those things! And blessed the heart which is empty of their memory, because in it our sweet God reveals Himself in his glory!
16. My Lord, how can desire have the abundance of delight if You are not mingled with it in the mystery of union? I am amazed[25] at the mystery! There is no gift like this, which stills the intellect and maintains it without stirrings because its sweetness is beyond strength. Nor is there anything like it which lends itself less to patterns of speech, and there is nothing like it for putting to shame the desire of the belly.

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[21] cf. Gen.1:26–27. There seem to be various stages of light in the life of the soul: the beauty of the soul itself, the image of God, is first purified by the divine light; then the vision of the divine light appears in the mirror of the soul; finally there is a direct vision of the divine light. See also Letters 15, 28, and 40. See Discourse 6, "On the visitations bestowed on solitaries," V.292b–304a.

[22] Mt. 6:5; Pseudo-Dionysius, *Theol.Mys.*, 1:3.

[23] cf. Mt. 6:6.

[24] cf. Mt. 6:5.

[25] Amazed, from wonder (*têmhâ*).

13. ܡܛܠ ܗܘ ܗܕܐ ܕܕܘܡܪܐ܆ ܕܗܢܐ ܚܕܝܐ ܒܚܘܕܝܐ ܒܚܘܕܝܐܝܬ
ܒ̈ܢܝܡܘܗܝ ܪܒܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ܆ ܘܡܢ ܛܠܝܪ ܟܦܝܢ ܒܘܣܡܝܗ. ܒܚܝܠܐ
ܗܘ ܒܗ ܛܒ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܢܒܥܐ܆ ܕܢܫ̈ܬܘܢ ܒܡܘܦܪܗ܆ ܡܢ
ܚܙܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܚܡܘܗܝ ܢܗܘܘܢ ܪ̈ܚܝܡܝܢ. ܕܒܡܪܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܣܝܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܡܬܡܗܘܢ܆
ܦܬܘܬܐ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܐܦ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܬܬܢܝܚ. ܒܟܠ ܒܗܘܢ ܚܢܢ ܒܡܕܒܪܐ
ܢܬ̈ܒܢ ܒܠܒܗܘܢ܆ ܕܒܪܚܡܘܗܝ ܒܢ̈ܝܬܐ ܢܬܠܒܫܘܢ܆ ܘܠܐ ܢܬܦܢܘܢ
ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܒܗ ܦܐܘܪܣܛܝܩܝܬ. ܠܝ ܡܪܚܩܝܢ ܠܐ ܢܪܘܢ. ܘܒܡܬܦܢܝܢܘܬܐ
ܡܩܕܫܐ ܒܡܒܡܘܬܐ ܠܡܪ̈ܬܐ ܒܒܝܬܘ ܙܘܢ ܕܠܚܝܘܢ ܀
14. ܡܛܩܐ ܕܝܢ ܘܡܫܝ̈ܚܐ ܡܢ ܐܦܝ ܛܘܒܐ ܕܙ̈ܢܬܐ ܢܗܘܘܢ ܙܢܝܢ
ܗܢ̈ܝܢܐ. ܒܗܠܝܢ ܒܟܢ ܙܟܐ ܒܠܗܘܢ. ܒܝ ܚܝܒܝܢ ܐܢܬ ܡܢ ܚܙܬܐ
ܕܬܪܝܐ. ܘܠܐܦ ܠܐܝܕܐ ܐܟܘܬ ܒܗܢܐ ܦܘܪܥܢܐ ܕܪ̈ܚܡܝܟ. ܒܟܠ ܡܕܡ
ܕܐܬܠܗܘܢ ܚܙܝܬ ܕܪ̈ܚܡܝܟ܆ ܡܢܗ ܠܚܢܢ ܢܣܒ ܐܢܬ. ܘܡܢ ܗܘ
ܕܡܬܡܗܘܢ ܒܩ̈ܕܡܝܢ ܠܚܝܐ ܐܢܬ܆ ܐܦ ܡܢܗ ܠܐܒܗܐ ܒܟܢ ܡܘܩܒܐ ܀
15. ܚܙܐ ܗܘ ܕܦܦܪܐ ܒܡܢܪܐ ܟܠܗ. ܕܒܟܠ ܢܗܘܐ ܦܟܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܗ ܡܕܡ.
ܘܗܕܐ ܒܟܢ ܫܘܚ̈ܠܦܐ ܡܢܗ ܡܩܒܠ. ܡܛܠ ܕܫܘܚܠܦܐ
ܙܡܝܢ ܒܗ܆ ܕܡܬ̈ܒܠܝܢ ܘܡܩ̈ܒܠܝܢ ܒܗܬܐ. ܘܕܢ̈ܝܚܢ
ܘܡܛܩܡ܆ ܘܕܦܫ̈ܛܢ ܘܩ̈ܫܝܢ. ܒܪܡ ܛܘܒܢܘܗ ܠܡܣܡܟܬܐ
ܕܦܓܪܐ ܡܢ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ܆ ܘܠܠܒܐ ܕܫܩܝܠ ܡܢ ܒܗܘܕܝܗܝܢ܆ ܕܒܗ
ܡܛܠܬܐ ܒܡܘܒܠܗ ܠܟܠܗܝܢ ܟܫܝܪܐ ܀
16. ܡܢܗ ܡܪܝ ܕܒܪܬܐ ܢܦܫܝ ܢܛܠ ܫܟܝܚܐ ܒܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ܆ ܠܝ ܒܗ
ܠܐ ܚܫܒܬ ܐܢܐ ܒܪܬܐ ܕܚܘܒܐ. ܐܝܟܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܪܬܐ. ܒܟܠ ܡܫܘܚܠܐ
ܕܡܦܠܐ ܘܡܡܝܢ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܠܐ ܐܦ̈ܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܗܢܐ܆ ܡܛܠܬܐ ܗܢܘܢ ܐܝܬ
ܕܟܠܬܐ ܡܢ ܢܛܐ܆ ܘܐܦܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܐܚܪܐ ܒܟܘܪ̈ܝܬܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ
ܢܩܠܠܢ ܒܪܘܚܗ. ܘܠܐ ܕܢܒܥܘܢ ܠܗ ܪ̈ܢܝ ܒܪܫܐ ܐܟܘܬܗ ܀

17. Why are you afflicted in your heart when you hear the words of these adversaries? Have you ever seen anyone made ugly or polluted by insult and abuse? Or who is there who is made beautiful and exalted by elegant phrases or words of praise? Who is able to give me joy as great as this: to be proclaimed to the world as impure and contemptible by false witnesses? As my Lord lives, I do not murmur against them to anyone; nor do I complain before him, but I pray for them as for my friends; I love them as those who bind my wounds, and from the joy of my heart I cry out:
18. "How I would wish, if it were possible, that even all the mute creatures would recite my reproaches and I become hateful to everyone; thus my iniquities might be purified by iniquity. How I should thank the Physician of souls, that before the sores of my soul become foul and fetid, He has prepared remedies to heal it! Glory to You, O true Physician, with your healing medicines You bind up the wounds of those who are afflicted! Amen. May the mercy of your grace be on those who report my wrong doings and your cleansing dew be on the impure who find fault! Amen."

17. ܡܛܠ ܠܟܢ ܐܝܬ ܒܠܒܢ ܒܡܫܡܠܝܐ ܕܡ̈ܠܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܡܘܒܠܐ. ܠܡܦܩܘ ܒܕܚܠ ܕܐܬܦܩܘ ܘܬܒܥܘ ܙܟ̈ܝܐ ܘܪ̈ܘܚܢܝܬܐ. ܐܘ ܐܝܟܘ ܕܡܦ̈ܪ ܘܡܢܟ ܒܥܠܝ̈ܡܘܬܐ ܡܬܩܠܐ ܘܩ̈ܠܐ ܕܪܘܚܢܝܬܐ. ܡܢܗ ܡܡܠܟ ܕܢܦܠ ܠܒ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܕܕܟܐ ܐܝܟ ܗܘܐ. ܕܡܢ ܦܘܩܕܐ ܕܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܠܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܐܠܗܝ ܠܦܠܐ ܘܦܠܚܢܐ. ܢܚ ܗܘ ܠܒ ܡܢܝ. ܕܠܐ ܡܢܠܟ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܐܢܫ. ܐܦܠܐ ܡܬܡܗܝܢ ܦܠܠܠ ܐܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܠܠ ܬܢܦܢ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܢܠܐ ܐܢܐ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܠܟܪ̈ܘܒܐ ܕܡܫܡܠܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܬܢܚ ܐܢܐ. ܘܡܢ ܚܕܘܬܗ ܕܠܟܢ ܡܠܐ ܐܢܐ.
18. ܕܪܒܐ ܦܘܠܛ ܠܗ ܡܡܫܚܐ ܗܘܐ. ܕܐܦ ܒܠܗܘܢ ܡܬ̈ܝܐ ܚ̈ܝܠܐ ܢܗܘܘܢ ܐܝܟ ܒܘ̈ܬܢ. ܘܐܗܘܐ ܫܢܝܐ ܠܟܠܠ ܒܪܢܫ. ܕܗܘܒܐ ܒܩ̈ܠܢ ܒܦܘܠܐ ܕܐܦܪܝܣܘܢ. ܘܟܡܐ ܠܒ ܠܦܘܪܫܢܗ ܠܐܣܝܐ ܕܢܦܩܐ. ܕܡܝܡ ܕܦ̈ܪܝܢ ܘܡܠܐܩܢ ܚܒ̈ܪܘܗܝ ܕܢܦܫ: ܡܠܟܢ ܕܪ̈ܒܐ ܠܚܘܠܡܢܗ. ܠܡ ܡܘܟܚܐ ܐܫܝܐ ܡܢܪܐ: ܫܪܒ ܟܐܫܐ ܕܡܩ̈ܢܝܐ ܒܫܩ̈ܝܠܘܗܝ ܡܢܬܠܡܝܐ ܐܡܝܢ. ܘܟܠܠ ܐܬܝܢ ܕܪ̈ܒܢ ܬܝܡܐ ܕܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ. ܘܟܠܠ ܛܝ̈ܒܐ ܕܡܢܝܚ ܛܥܠܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܡܝܢ ܀

[Again Concerning Humility[1] and Obedience]

1. If, my brother, you are determined to proceed on the way of your Lord's humility and to take up the example of his gentleness, that with Him and through Him you might draw near to his Father,[2] that is, see the glory of his Majesty in your soul for its delight: walk according to the example which He has shown you. For at first He did not use great things, He the Great One for whom it would have been easy, but He began in a human way with lowly things and concluded divinely with exalted things. He did these things for our sake, for our instruction, to prepare our way, not for his sake. As He said: *I am the way*.[3] If then you wish to become his disciple and his friend, walk with Him according to his word that the disciple is to be like his master.[4]
2. And what is his likeness? He observed the duties of human nature, and hid those of his divinity; the Lord of the Law was Himself *subject to the Law*[5] and kept its commandments. Afterwards, He went out to the desert to fast and strove with the Accuser and subdued him.[6] Then, after his victory, He began to act divinely and showed us that whoever in a homely fashion does not carry out lowly actions to give rest to others and does not subject himself,[7] following Paul, as a servant to his masters[8] in all things despicable and scornful—but goes out first to stand in solitary combat, is not able to conquer nor acquire the purity which sees God. As the skilled, intelligent Evagrius said: "It is not possible to acquire a pure heart without perfect mastery over the demons."[9]

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[1] Humility (*makkîkûtâ*): this letter is commented on at length in Beulay ES, 105–111. Humility for John is the ground on which the spiritual edifice grows. Much of his thinking here resembles that of Abba Isaiah except that John seems to take it a step further, uniting it even closer to the mystical life by the ministry of the heart (*pulhânâ dablébbâ*). On the importance of humility in Isaac of Nineveh, see Alfeyev, *Spiritual World of Isaac*, 111–128.

[2] cf. Jn. 14:6.

[3] Jn. 14:6.

[4] cf. Matt. 10:25; Luke 6:40.

[5] Gal. 4:4.

[6] Matt. 4:1–11.

[7] cf. Lk. 2:51.

[8] cf. 1 Cor. 9:19.

[9] See Letter 27 in W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus* (Berlin, 1912), 582.

ܬܘܒ ܕܥܠ ܦܫܝܩܘܬܐ ܘܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܐ.

1. ܠܐ ܒܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܡܘܒܠܗ ܕܡܪܢ ܫܒܝܩܐ ܠܢ ܠܡܪܕܐ ܐܝܟ:
ܘܕܘܡܝܐ ܕܝܚܝܕܝܘܬܗ ܠܡܫܡܫܘ: ܕܫܡܫܗ ܘܒܐܝܕܗ ܠܐܠܗܘܗܝ
ܠܐܒܘܗܝ. ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܪܒܘܬܗ ܠܝܕܥܐ ܒܢܦܫܢ
ܒܡܣܟܢܘܬܗ: ܒܛܘܦܣܐ ܕܢܦܫ ܠܢ ܒܗ ܗܠܝܢ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ
ܐܬܢܦܫ ܒܪܘܪܒܘܬܐ: ܗܘ ܪܡܐ ܒܡܘܪܐ ܡܢ ܦܫܝܩ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ:
ܐܠܐ ܒܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܐܝܟܘܬܗ ܦܪܘܩ: ܘܒܪܡܫܬܐ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܦܠܚ.
ܘܗܟܢ ܡܫܠܡܢ ܒܢܘܗܡ ܫܒܪ. ܕܕܪܫ ܐܘܪܚ: ܠܗ
ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܗ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܐܢܐ ܐܝܬܝ ܐܘܪܚܐ. ܠܐ ܠܡܫܒܩܗ ܘܢܦܫܗ
ܙܒܢ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܬܒܥܘ: ܒܗ ܗܠܟܢ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܠܡܫܒܩ ܒܪܘܚܗ
ܡܬܕܡܐ ܀

2. ܘܦܫܝܩܘ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܒܬܪ ܕܪܘܩܝܗܘܢ ܕܒܢܝܐ ܐܢܫܐ: ܘܦܫܩ ܗܠܝܢ
ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ. ܫܡܥܢ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܒܢܝܫܘܬܐ ܡܪܢ ܕܢܝܫܘܬܐ:
ܘܒܬܪ ܦܘܩܕܢܘܗܝ. ܘܒܠܐܘܢ ܒܝܫ ܠܒܢܝܐ ܒܫܡܝܢ. ܘܐܬܦܠܓ
ܒܗ ܐܘܟܠܣܝܐ ܘܢܟܣܘܗ. ܘܗܘܝܢ ܦܪܘܩ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܠܫܡܫܢ
ܒܠܐ ܪܒܘܬܗ. ܘܢܗܘܝܢ ܕܒܠܐ ܦܢ ܕܒܠܬܗ ܠܐ ܦܫܪ ܡܠܦܢܘܬܐ
ܒܢܝܫܐ ܕܐܢܫܐ: ܘܫܡܫܢ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ ܐܝܟ ܥܒܕܐ
ܠܡܪܘܗܝ ܒܟܠ ܙܒܢܐ ܘܡܫܬܥܐ: ܘܢܦܩ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܡܫܡܫ
ܒܡܪܟܐ ܒܡܘܬܗ: ܠܐ ܙܟܐ. ܘܠܡܫܡܫ ܕܒܗܘܬܐ ܢܝܫܗ ܠܠܒܗܘܢ
ܠܐ ܡܫܒܚ: ܐܝܟ ܕܝܘܒܠܐ ܡܘܗܪܐ ܐܘܓܢܣ ܐܡܪ. ܕܒܠܬ
ܠܡܫܡܠܐ ܒܟܠ ܕܒܠܐ: ܕܠܐ ܡܫܬܠܛܢ ܓܒܪܐ ܕܟܠ ܦܘܪܐ ܀

3. Indeed, because the Rebel who opposes us fights by means of pride and wishes to conquer wrongfully by arrogance, our victorious King arms us with the weapons of humility. For without the invincible strength of humility no one conquers. Humility abases the pride of the deceitful one, and makes him be trampled under the feet of the gentle and kind. See how our Fathers, these heroes who prepared our path, put on humility which is the garment of Christ,[10] and thereby defeated Satan and bound him with the bonds of darkness.
4. The greatest and first-born of the Prophets, by his humility undid and made ineffectual all the tricks of all the demons of the Egyptians.[11] The Lord of the Prophets and the Fulfillment of prophecy, by his most sublime gentleness relieved our shoulders of the yoke of death and cut the snares of our enemy from our neck. Concerning the great Pambo whose face shone,[12] the faithful Abba Poemen said that he was strong and great in his work, but he rushed to perform every humble service.
5. Abba Theodore, who with the bonds of his prayer was binding the demons outside of his cell,[13] made himself the last of all and fled from an office of honor.[14] And the devil, when he was conquered by Abba Macarius, said concerning his defeat: "Of all the things you do, only by your submission are you able to conquer me."[15] The devil is not able to cast a person down if he does not accept pride from him, the passion by which he himself fell from heaven to the bottomless pit; by his own experience he learned about the passion which alienates from the Lord and understood that whoever accepts it, his fall is grievous.

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[10] For Isaac of Nineveh, "Humility is the garment of divinity," as found in A. J. Wensinck, *Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Nineveh* (Amsterdam, 1923), 384. See Homily 82 in Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus*, 574.

[11] cf. Ex. 7, 8.

[12] Budge, *Book of Paradise*, I, 799, n. 607.

[13] Ibid., I, 900, n. 264 [260]; here it says that Abba Theodore was fleeing the diaconate.

[14] Ibid., I, 885, n. 231 [227].

[15] Ibid., I, 743, n. 443.

3. ܡܛܠ ܗܢܐ ܕܡܪܕܘܬܐ ܕܠܡܘܕܥܘ ܒܪܡܙܘܬܐ ܡܩܪܒ:
ܘܒܝܘܒܠܐ ܒܥܠܬܐ ܠܡܪܕܐ ܙܒܢܐ: ܒܪܝܐ ܕܡܘܒܠܐ ܡܠܒܫ
ܐܘܒܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܗ. ܒܠܒܝ ܗܢܐ ܢܫܠܗ ܠܐ ܡܬܢܟܦܐ ܕܡܘܒܠܐ.
ܒܠܒܟ ܕܙܒܠܐ. ܡܘܒܠܐ ܡܫܒܚ ܙܡܘܬܗ ܕܒܝܬܐ: ܘܫܒܩ ܠܗ
ܘܢܦܫܬܐ ܕܬܓܠܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܘܒܩܫܝܐ. ܚܕ ܐܡܠܐ ܗܘܘ ܗܢܐ ܕܒܪܝܬܐ
ܕܬܡܢ ܐܘܪܚ ܐܒܗܝ ܠܒܝܬܗ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܬܐ ܐܫܬܠܡܗ
ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: ܘܒܗ ܫܒܩܘܗܝ ܠܫܛܝܐ ܘܐܫܬܪܘܗܝ ܒܒܪܝܫ
ܚܝܘܬܐ ܀
4. ܙܒܢܐ ܘܒܡܪܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ: ܒܡܫܡܫܘܬܗ ܦܪܐ ܘܒܛܠ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܦܘܪܫܢܐ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ ܩܠܝܐ ܕܡܪܕܝܐ. ܡܪܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܘܫܘܡܠܝ
ܢܒܝܘܬܐ: ܒܚܝܘܬܗ ܙܡܪܬ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܐܝܟ ܚܝܬܗ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܡܢ
ܟܠܦ: ܘܒܫܡ ܚܝܘܗܝ ܕܫܢܝܐ ܡܢ ܙܘܢ. ܒܟܠ ܕܗܘܐ
ܦܪܘܫܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܦܣܩܗ ܕܡܪ ܐܒܐ ܦܘܡܗ ܫܢܝܐ. ܕܚܝܠܬܐ ܗܘܐ
ܘܙܒܢܐ ܒܒܥܒܗ ܘܒܟܠ ܒܟܠ ܠܫܡܫܬܐ ܕܒܪܝܘܬܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܗܘܐ ܀
5. ܘܐܒܐ ܠܬܘܕܪܐ ܕܒܪܝܫ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ ܩܠܝܐ ܠܒܪ ܡܢ ܡܟܠܬܗ
ܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ: ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܒܟܠܗ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܫܒܩ ܗܘܐ. ܘܡܢ
ܠܫܡܫܬܐ ܡܫܡܪܬܐ ܫܪܝ ܗܘܐ. ܘܡܠܝܐ ܒܝ ܐܙܕܒܢ ܡܢ ܐܒܐ
ܡܡܪܢܫ ܐܡܪ ܒܟܠ ܫܒܩܬܗ. ܕܡܢ ܟܠ ܕܫܒܩ ܐܢܬ:
ܒܠܒܗ ܒܫܘܒܚܝ ܡܫܒܚ ܐܢܬ ܙܒܢܐ ܐܢܬ ܠܒܝ. ܠܐ ܡܫܒܚ
ܦܪܐ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܠܝ ܙܡܘܬܐ ܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܢܦܒܠ. ܫܢܝܐ ܕܢܦܠ ܒܗ
ܗܘ ܡܢ ܫܡܝܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢܝܐ: ܒܫܡܝܢܐ ܕܒܡܘܬܗ ܢܒܝܗ
ܚܫܝܐ ܡܢܒܪܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝܐ: ܘܒܝܬ ܕܟܠ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܡܦܒܠ:
ܒܫܝܢܐ ܗܘ ܦܫܘܠܬܗ ܀

6. Therefore arm yourself with humility which is pride's antidote, and you will be preserved from a slippery downfall by considering yourself contemptible, to be scorned, and stupid. "Woe to the one who is wise in his own eyes," says the prophet.[16] Make of yourself a broom and a cloth for cleaning all the shameful things of your brothers, thinking as a servant towards his masters and not as a brother among his brothers. And with discernment look at the Pauline principle, lest your labor be without fruit: "All for God."[17]
7. At the time of submission, do not seek freedom, lest you be bound by the yoke of slavery at the time of freedom like so many. It is not good for an infant to have bread, nor for an adult to suck milk. More than anything, it is humbleness of heart which elevates the rational mind to look on the loftiness of God, and that a person treat himself with contempt and despise himself, knowing himself to be ignorant in word and in thought.
8. As for me, my brother, while I write these things to you, woe is me because while I am defiled by all these impurities, yet I think I am something. My brother, guard against this thought which darkens those who are enlightened, whereby to consider oneself as a living dog is reckoned a folly by the mind seeking God. As the prophet says knowing hidden things: "The humble soul is God's dwelling."[18] And one who in himself bore the trial said: "The humble one inclines his head in a lowly spirit and becomes the dwelling place of the Holy Trinity."[19] And again: "The humble one will see the star of prayer."

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[16] cf. Prov. 3:7; 26:12; Rom. 12:16.
[17] cf. 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17.
[18] cf. Is. 57:15.
[19] According to Beulay, an Arabic version indicates Evagrius as the source here.

6. ܡܫܬܥܒܕܐ ܒܫܘܥܒܕܐ ܕܠܫܘܥܒܕܗ ܐܣܝܪ ܐܢܬ. ܗܘܐ ܚܫܝܫ
ܐܢܬ ܡܢ ܡܫܘܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܕܡܕ̈ܒܪܢܘܗܝ. ܟܕ ܢܦܩ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ ܡܫܬܥܐ
ܘܡܫܬܥܒܕܐ ܘܫܒܠܐ. ܗܢ ܠܒܪܢܫ ܒܒܢ̈ܝ ܢܦܫܗ ܐܡܪ ܢܒܝܐ.
ܥܒܕ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ ܡܫܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܠܥܒܘܕܐ. ܘܫܘܦܪܐ ܠܟܠܠ ܙܒܢ̈ܬܐ
ܕܐܝܬܝܟ: ܐܝܟ ܥܒܕܐ ܠܒܝܬ ܡܪ̈ܘܗܝ. ܘܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܐܝܠܐ ܠܒܝܬ
ܐܒܘ̈ܗܝ ܒܪܚܡܐ. ܘܒܥܘܪܩܐ ܢܐܪ ܠܥܒܕܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ: ܕܠܐ
ܢܗܘܐ ܒܥܠܡ ܕܠܐ ܦܐܪ̈ܐ. ܟܠܠ ܡܬܠܠ ܠܠܗܐ.
7. ܘܥܒܕܐ ܕܡܫܥܒܕܐ ܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܚܐܪܘܬܐ. ܕܠܐ ܠܐܢܫ ܥܒܕܐ
ܕܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܥܒܕܐ ܕܚܐܪܘܬܐ ܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܫܦܝܪܬܐ. ܠܐ ܡܫܬܪܐ ܠܚܫܒܐ
ܠܥܠܡܐ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦܠܐ ܠܫܒܪܐ ܚܠܒܐ ܠܡܐܢܗ. ܡܛܠ ܡܢ
ܟܠܠ ܡܫܬܐ ܠܡܥܒܕܐ ܠܡܫܚ ܒܪܘܡܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܡܥܒܕܐ
ܕܥܠܡܐ. ܘܗܢܘ ܕܢܚܘܬ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܘܡܗ ܘܢܚܬܐ. ܘܥܒܕ ܗܘ
ܠܗ ܠܐ ܢܥܘܠܐ: ܒܥܠܡܬܐ ܘܚܘܫܒܐ ܀
8. ܐܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܚܝ: ܟܕ ܗܟܢ ܠܟ ܡܠܟ ܐܢܐ: ܘܗܐ ܠܡܘܡܬܐ
ܢܗܘܐ ܐܢܐ. ܕܟܕ ܡܫܬܒܩ ܐܢܐ ܒܥܠܡܝܢ ܗܦܟܬܐ: ܒܟܠ ܢܦܫ
ܕܡܕܡ ܐܡܠܟ ܪܢܐ ܐܢܐ. ܐܙܕܗܪ ܐܚܝ ܡܢ ܚܘܫܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܡܫܬܚܩ
ܢܦܫܐ: ܕܢܫܬܒܩ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܟܠܒܐ ܢܚܐ: ܫܥܒܕܘܬܐ ܢܥܒܕܐ
ܠܗ ܠܪܚܡܐ ܡܠܐ ܠܠܠܗܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܢܒܝܐ ܢܚܬ ܒܫܬܝܬܐ ܐܡܪ.
ܒܘܡܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܢܦܫܗ ܕܡܥܒܕܐ ܐܬܠܗ. ܘܗܢܘ ܕܒܡܘܡܗ
ܡܛܠ ܢܫܡܐ ܐܡܪ. ܕܡܪܝ ܪܢܫܗ ܡܥܒܕܐ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܡܥܒܕܐ:
ܘܐܘܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܡܢܫܬܐ. ܘܐܠܘܟ. ܒܘܥܒܐ ܕܙܒܠܗ
ܚܕܐ ܡܥܒܕܐ ܀

9. Be the first at every despised work and the last to finish.[20] Thus your foulness will be cleansed by what is ugly, and your sins be made whiter than snow[21] by what is despised and contemptible. While you are on duty, let there be no moment void of vile work, in preference to a better ministry. Close your mouth to all words good and bad and breathe life from the mouth of others, that is, keep in your memory the words of the Spirit spoken by them, and be constant in service to give them rest. Let it be understood that of all the vile tasks to be done, the worst ones are your portion; but the honorable ones, behave as not worthy of them. In every humiliation, show your weakness to the One who knows all.[22]
10. In all the actions you do with others, whether virtuous or contemptuous, show yourself the least of all. Abhor and neglect your wisdom, that the wisdom of the Lord may dwell in you; be an adversary to your own understanding, that the knowledge of truth may make you its steward. Control the words of your tongue and do not listen to those who say foolish and stupid things. Do not have a friend, I beg you, who may seek your help at the time of your conflict. Nor have an enemy who may hate your friend.[23] Treat everyone equally in peace without secrecy. And blessed are you if you listen to me!
11. Towards the humble put on modesty, and with the contentious speak cheerfully. In the presence of the wise, be attentive and each time you are questioned, say: "I do not know." If you see someone doing a blameworthy deed, and you are asked who has done it, say: "I do not know." So also be on guard about the words which you hear.

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[20] These references to the common life indicate that this was written for one still living in a community rather than for another solitary.

[21] cf. Is. 1:18.

[22] To the One who knows all (*kul*).

[23] Not to have a close friend who might interfere in difficult times which are for solitary combat, or whose friendship might be resented by others, but rather to live the common life in detachment.

9. ܡܕܡܐ ܗ̣ܘܐ ܒܟܠܠ ܫܘܒܗܪܐ ܕܡܣܬܟܠܢܘܬܐ ܘܐܣܝܪܐ ܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܗ.
ܕܗܘܒܐ ܪ̈ܐܬܐ ܒܚܫܘܬܐ ܠܐܡܪܗ. ܘܢ̈ܦܫܬܗܘܢ ܒܪܒܐ ܘܡܣܬܟܠܢܘܬܐ
ܢܛܪ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܠܐܢܘܫܗ. ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܟ ܛܘܪܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܡܢ
ܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܕܥܒܕܐ:: ܠܫܘܠܚܢܐ ܡܠܘܬܐ ܠܥܡܪܟ ܒܪܟܐ
ܕܡܘܒܥܝܢ. ܡܘܕܥ ܦܘܡܟ ܡܢ ܟܠܠ ܛܒ ܘܟܝܣ: ܘܫܘܡ
ܣܬ̈ܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܐ ܕܐܣܝܪܐ: ܗ̇ܘܘ ܕܝܢ ܛܪ ܩ̈ܠܟ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܢܗܘܢ
ܡܠܦ̈ܢܢ ܒܟܘܪܗܢ. ܘܐܝܟ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܒܠܡܫܡܫܬܐ ܕܢܣܒܘܢ.
ܫܘܒ̈ܚܐ ܒܪ̈ܬܐ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ ܐܣܝܪ ܫܘܒ̈ܚܐ: ܡܢܐܬܐ ܕܠܟ
ܢܛܪܘܢ. ܘܒܗܘܠܝܢ ܡܫܡ̈ܫܐ: ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܦܐܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܠܐܢܫ.
ܒܒܠܗ ܡܘܦܩܐ ܢܘܐ ܡܣܬܒܠܢܝ ܠܐܢܫ ܟܠܠ ❖

10. ܒܟܠܠ ܒܟ̈ܪܐ ܕܟܡ ܐܣ̈ܝܪܐ ܚܒܝܒ ܐܢܬ. ܐܝ ܡܣܠܘܬܐ ܐܘ ܡܬܠܐ.
ܒܪܝܐ ܕܒܠܗܘܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܢܘܐ ܢܦܫܝ. ܐܦܠܐ ܣܒܡܠܢܝ ܘܡܘܬܟ:
ܕܣܒܡܠܗ ܕܡܪܢܐ ܠܐܦܪܐ ܒܝ. ܠܒܝܒܠܝ ܗܘܐ ܫܘܘܒܠܐ:
ܕܝܒܠ ܡܘܡܬܐ ܠܐܒܝܢܝ ܒܗ ܒܐܒܪܐ. ܛܒܘܣ ܩ̈ܠܒ
ܠܥܠܝ. ܘܡܘܠ ܡܫܡܫܢܝ ܡܢ ܡ̈ܩܒܠܬܐ ܕܦ̈ܩܘܗܝ ܘܩ̈ܫܒܢ.
ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܠܟ ܙܢܝܐ ܚܒܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢܝ: ܐܝܠܐ ܕܚܒܠܐ ܒܗܘܕܝܢ
ܒܪܒܐ ܕܐܒܠܒܝܢ. ܘܠܐ ܫܝܐܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܠܡܣܒܝܢ. ܒܗܢ ܒܟܠܗ
ܒܫܘܐܐ ܠܐܢܫ: ܒܦܝܐ ܫܛܪ ܡܢ ܙܐܪܐ. ܘܛܘܒܝܢ ܐܝ
ܠܡܫܒܥ ❖

11. ܟܠܐ ܡܫ̈ܝܚܐ ܓܒܪܐ ܢܬܡܘܐ. ܘܒܗܝ ܣ̈ܪܝܩܐ ܛܠܠܐ ܦܪܣܛܐ.
ܟܠܐ ܡܬ̈ܠܝܐ ܗܘܐ ܙܘܥܐ. ܘܟܠ ܕܠܫܡܥܬܐ: ܐܡܪ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ
ܐܢܐ. ܐܝ ܢܕܥ ܐܢܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܫܡܪ ܫܘܒܪܐ ܒܝܘܡܐ: ܘܠܫܡܥܬܐ ܕܡܕܡ
ܓܒܪ ܗܘܢ: ܐܡܪ ܕܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܐ. ܘܗܟܢܐ ܐܦ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ
ܕܗܘܠܐ ܢܛܪ ❖

12. To everyone who calls you, answer, and all which you are commanded by him do for your personal profit. Excel in every law which the Spirit has ordained, at the proper time and not when it seems right to you. Be obedient to the Lawgiver by keeping his laws, and reject the imaginary laws which your thought causes to spring up. Do not think to change the times which the one who gave you your habit has set for you, lest you declare yourself to be wiser than him.[24] Control your belly with measure, and do not insist you are right about something, as one who is ignorant. Let your way of life be revealed to God alone, and let no one clothed with flesh probe your secrets.
13. Do not place your confidence in any one, because unalloyed truth is lacking to our wicked generation. Do not do your own will, lest your ministry be rejected by God; but in everything be an enemy to your will and do all which pleases your companion. Sing praises from your heart without ceasing, and meld all your actions to the remembrance of your Creator: that is the ministry which will manifest the face of your Lord to you; and this is the reward received by the one who prays to God in secret. "Go in, pray in secret in your inner room, for there you will see your Father who is hidden:"[25] his reward, given openly, is his manifestation in the soul.
14. Let no ministry be greater in your eyes at the time of submission than approaching God, except what breaks your will in the work of giving rest to others. Free ministry at the time of freedom is profitable; but freedom is opposed to submission, as also submission to freedom. There is no profit in ministry which is done casually because it produces no fruit for the joy of the worker's heart.

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[24] Progression from Novitiate to Community to Solitary life is of course dependent on the judgment of the Superior.

[25] cf. Matt. 6:6.

12. ܒܟܠ ܕܦܩܕ ܐܢܬ ܥܒܕ. ܘܟܠ ܕܡܬܦܩܕ ܐܢܬ ܢܛܘܪܘܗܝ
ܫܦܝܪ ܒܥܘܕܪܢܐ ܕܡܠܘܟܐ. ܒܟܠ ܢܦܫܟ ܕܝܠܟ ܪܘܚܐ
ܒܪܚܡܘܗܝ ܒܗ ܐܠܗܐ. ܘܠܐ ܒܗܘ ܕܠܟ ܫܦܝܪ ܡܬܚܙܐ.
ܡܫܬܡܥܢܐ ܗܘܝ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܢܦܫܟ ܒܫܠܡܘܬܐ ܢܬܡܫܡܫܘܢ.
ܘܐܫܠܡ ܢܦܫܟ ܫܟܝܪܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܚܕܫܒܝ. ܠܐ ܬܗܘܐ ܦܩܕ
ܚܕܫܒܝ ܠܐܚܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܠܟܝ ܢܗܘܒܘܢ ܕܐܫܬܡܥܝ: ܕܠܐ ܬܐܡܪ
ܢܦܫܝ ܕܢܚܡܨ ܐܢܬ ܡܢܗ. ܛܒܬ ܒܪܫܝ ܒܫܡܘܥܬܐ: ܘܠܐ
ܬܗܘܐ ܦܫܩ ܟܠܗ ܡܕܡ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ. ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܟܠܗ
ܬܗܘܐ ܟܠܐ ܕܒܪܝ. ܘܠܟܠܒܫ ܒܫܪܐ ܠܐ ܬܗܘܫ ܒܫܬܩܝ ❖
13. ܠܐ ܬܬܟܠ ܟܠܗ ܒܪܐܫ: ܕܫܪܪܐ ܠܐ ܚܟܝܡܬܐ ܐܬܚܙܝ ܠܗ
ܡܢ ܕܪܝ ܒܢܝܬܐ. ܠܐ ܬܫܬܒܪ ܕܒܢܝ ܢܦܫܟ: ܕܠܐ ܢܬܠܠܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܟ
ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܟܠ ܫܥܬܐ ܗܘܝ ܠܟܕܒܢܝܟ: ܘܟܠ ܕܠܚܒܪܟ
ܫܦܝܪ ܗܘܝܬ ܠܗ. ܫܒܘܩ ܡܢ ܠܟܠܟ ܕܠܐ ܫܟܚܬ. ܘܒܟܠ
ܫܘܒܚܝܟ ܒܗܘܢ ܠܒܝܫ ܗܘܝܬ ܢܟܠܐ. ܗܢܘ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ
ܕܐܦ ܡܢܗ ܡܢܝܐ ܠܟܝ. ܘܗܢܘ ܦܘܪܫܢ ܠܒܪܗ ܕܗܘ ܘܡܛܠ
ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܫܦܝܪܐ. ܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܒܫܦܝܪܐ ܠܐܬܘܬܟ ܕܐܝܟ ܬܗܘܐ
ܠܐܚܪܢ ܕܡܬܟܫܝ. ܦܘܪܫܢܗ ܕܚܟܝܡܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܗܘ ܕܒܫܠܡܐ ❖
14. ܠܐ ܬܗܘܐ ܪܒ ܒܒܢܝܟ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܕܡܦܪܫ ܠܟ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܒܪܚܡܐ
ܕܫܘܒܚܐ: ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܒܫܦܝܪ ܕܒܢܝ ܡܬܦܠܚ ܠܟܢܫܐ
ܕܐܚܪܢܐ. ܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܚܠܦܐ ܒܪܚܡܐ ܕܚܠܘܦܬܐ ܡܬܟܠܝ ܗܘ.
ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܗܝ ܚܠܦܬܐ ܠܫܘܒܚܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܫܘܒܚܐ
ܠܚܠܘܦܬܐ. ܒܟܠ ܗܢܝܢ ܒܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܕܒܫܦܝܪܐ ܡܬܦܠܚ.
ܒܠܐ ܡܫܬܡܥ ܒܗ ܦܐܪܐ ܠܒܝܫܬ ܒܟܠܗ ܕܦܠܚܐ ❖

15. A garden abundant in all good things to delight in, such is the soul of the one who does everything for God, to find the knowledge of him. The wise one fits his ministry to his measure, but the fool seeks what exceeds him. Knowledge[26] proceeds according to the ministry of each abode, but ignorance confuses its labor in a trackless waste; as a result of its toil it eats insipid and bitter fruits. You then, O wise one, be occupied with knowledge, as you have learned.
16. Be clothed always with the modesty pleasing to God, because it will bring death to the passions in your soul. Put on humility at all times because it makes you a dwelling for God. Deal kindly with everyone, thereby your soul will be enlightened to see hidden things. Humble yourself to learn from those who are instructed the meaning of the mysteries which are in the Scriptures, and do not rely on understanding acquired from your labor: humility is greater than toil as you learn from the one who fasted seventy weeks;[27] and understanding is not given to the proud, as the sage explains it.[28]
17. As long as you are in community, in all the communal tasks, be one who is subject and not one who commands. At all times, constantly shield your vision from harmful sights, and by your thought destroy their images from your heart. Understand what I say, and may the Lord give you the strength to get rid of the images which are in your intellect! Amen.

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[26] cf. Abba Isaiah 23.7, see de Broc, *Abbé Isaïe*, 194–95.

[27] Possible reference to Daniel for whom fasting was integral to his understanding of the mysteries and to his prophetic ministry. "Seventy weeks" may refer to the prophecy indicated in Dan. 9. On the Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel and recent studies linking it to seventh-century monastic circles, see Golitzin, "Making the Inside like the Outside."

[28] Ps. 49:13, 21.

15. ܦܪܝܫܐ ܫܡܝܫ ܒܟܠ ܙܒܢ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ: ܢܦܫܗ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܟܠ ܡܛܠ ܐܠܗܐ ܫܒܩ ܕܢܚܒ ܕܒܠܗܘ. ܢܟܝܦܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܗ ܫܒܝܩ: ܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܡܬܟܠܝܢ ܡܢܗ ܐܟܝܠ. ܕܒܗܬܬܐ ܒܫܘܟܢܐ ܕܐܘܪ̈ܚܗ ܙܕܩ. ܘܠܐ ܕܒܗܬܬܐ ܒܠܘܬܐ ܡܫܟܠܠܐ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ. ܡܛܠܗܕܐ ܦܐܪ̈ܐ ܛܒ̈ܬܐ ܘܡܬܝ̈ܪܐ ܡܢ ܒܡܠܬܗ ܡܫܬܐܠܢܐ. ܐܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܘ ܢܟܝܦܐ: ܒܝܕܥܬܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܗܘܦܟܟ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܠܗܘ ܀

16. ܐܬܠܒܫ ܒܠܒܘ ܢܟܦܘܬܐ ܕܝܠܟ ܠܐܠܗܐ: ܕܗܘ ܡܥܒܕܢܘܬܐ ܬܝܬܐ ܡܢ ܢܦܫܟ. ܠܟܒܫ ܡܦܣܩܘܬܐ ܒܡܠܟܝ: ܕܗܘ ܚܒܪܐ ܠܟ ܒܡܫܪܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ. ܒܚܫܝܫܘܬܐ ܐܬܢܣܒ ܒܗܝܢ ܒܟܠܗ: ܕܒܗ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܦܫܟ ܠܡܫܪܐ ܡܩܒܠܬܐ. ܥܒܕ ܢܦܫܟ ܠܡܬܠܟ ܡܢ ܬܘܟܠܐ ܫܘܦܠܐ ܙܐܪܐ ܕܒܠܬܐ: ܘܒܠܐ ܕܒܗܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܒܡܠܟܝ ܠܐ ܬܬܟܠܐ. ܙܒ ܡܘܟܠܐ ܡܢ ܒܡܠܐ. ܐܟܡܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܪܡ ܡܟܒܝܢ ܡܩܒܠܝܢ ܢܟܦ ܐܠܐ. ܘܕܠܐ ܡܬܕܒܪ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܣܘܟܠܐ: ܢܟܝܦܐ ܡܫܟܠܠ ܀

17. ܒܡܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܪܢܫܐ ܐܬܟܝ. ܒܟܠ ܣܘܥܪܢܐ ܫܘܢܝܐ: ܡܫܟܠܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܐ ܦܩܘܕܐ. ܗܘܬܐ ܒܡܠܟܝ ܐܝܟ ܚܙܐܝܢ ܒܐܦܝܗ ܡܢ ܬܢܘܬܐ ܡܣܬܪܢܐ. ܘܒܣܘܥܪܢ ܢܚܠܠ ܡܢ ܠܟܝܢ ܕܡܩܠܗܘܢ. ܐܫܬܡܠܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ. ܡܪܝܐ ܢܛܠ ܠܟܝܢ ܢܛܠܠ ܠܡܛܥܡ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܀

18. For the more a person despises and rejects himself, thus will he be glorified by God. And according as he gives himself to the service and contentment of others with discernment, thus God will show him to many as exalted and glorified, and they will earnestly submit to his contentment and to his will. And God also listens to his every request because he obeys Him. If Joseph had not first subjected himself to slavery, he would not have become a ruler in Egypt;[29] and if the Only Begotten had not Himself assumed the role of servant among his disciples,[30] He would not have had authority over the passions and the demons. He would not have conquered his enemies and all would not have been subject to Him, as to the Lord and King, by order of the Creator of all.[31]
19. Before everything and in everything, this is what I caution you about: do not be dead to Life, that is, may your heart never be empty of the remembrance of your Lord. This is the meaning of: *Whoever lives and believes in me will not die forever.*[32] For virtue, whose ministry is not mixed with the thought of God, is like a corpse without life. There is no consolation for parents in dead children, but only a broken heart; so also without discernment there is no fruit of joy produced for the pleasure of the one who cultivates virtues and a good life, but only heartache and torment.
20. Wise is the person of discernment who shows his banner: "For God alone"![33] Fools stumble like blind men over many of the things performed by him for their healing. Better for you is the continual thought of God together with the ministry of deeds, than standing at a regular service being seen by someone. Many are they who till the land, but only the wise increase its fruit. Concerning those who were eating at a single table, a discerning elder attested that many of them were like swine eating refuse. And concerning *those who eat the Body of Our Lord and drink his Blood unworthily*, the Apostle says that this is found to be *their condemnation*.[34] On this account, despise and reject your wisdom, and honor Christ the universal Wisdom. With discernment and submission bear his yoke at all times; then you will be blessed, for the fruits of your ministry are being placed in his treasury.

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[29] cf. Gen. 39–41.
[30] cf. Lk. 22:26; Jn. 13:4.
[31] cf. 1 Cor. 15:24–28; Creator of all (*kul*).
[32] Jn. 11:26.
[33] cf. 1 Cor. 10:31.
[34] 1 Cor. 11:27–29.

18. ܒܥܡܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܕܦܠܚ ܐܢܫ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܘܡܫܡܠܐ: ܗܘܒܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ
ܡܦܬܠܚ. ܘܠܟܘܠ ܕܢܗܘܐ ܢܦܫܗ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܬܐ ܘܢܝܚܐ ܕܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ
ܒܦܘܪܫܢܐ: ܗܘܒܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܪܒܐ ܘܡܫܒܚܐ ܠܡܣܟܢܘܬܐ ܡܬܝܗܒܐ.
ܘܠܒܢܘܗܝ ܘܠܒܢ̈ܝ ܒܢܘܗܝ ܒܣܓܝܐܘܬܐ ܡܬܠܒܒܝܢ. ܐܦ ܐܠܗܐ ܢܛܪ
ܠܗ ܒܟܠ ܒܟܠܗ ܒܝ ܐܬܬܡܣ ܠܗ. ܐܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܒܩ ܢܘܗܦ
ܢܦܫܗ ܡܬܡܠܟ ܠܟܒܝܘܬܐ: ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܪܐ ܠܟܠ ܡܕܡ. ܐܦ ܠܐ
ܦܟܠ ܒܡܢܘܡܗ ܢܣܝܢܐ ܦܠܚܘܬܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܒܥܘܠܡܢܗ: ܠܐ
ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܟܠ ܢܦܫ ܘܩ̈ܢܝܢܐ. ܘܙܒܢ ܠܟܠܟܠ̈ܒܢܘܗܝ: ܘܡܫܬܠܒܒ
ܠܗ ܟܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܡܪܐ ܘܡܟܠܐ ܒܦܘܡܝ ܚܒܘܫܐ ܕܟܠ ❖

19. ܡܕܡ ܒܠܥܕܝܢ ܘܒܒܠܥܕܝܢ: ܐܬܗܘܪ ܒܠܗܝ ܗܘܐ. ܕܡܣܒܪܬܐ ܡܢ ܚ̈ܝܐ
ܠܐ ܠܗܘܐ. ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ: ܕܠܒܝ ܡܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܡܕܡ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܫܒܝܩ.
ܗܕܐ ܗܝ ܗ̇ܝ ܕܟܠ ܕܢܚ ܘܡܬܪܚܡ ܒܝ ܠܟܠܟܡ ܠܐ ܢܗܘܐ.
ܡܬܘܪܬܐ ܕܒܗ ܦܘܠܚܢܗ ܪܒܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܒܠܥ: ܐܝܟ ܫܒܪܐ
ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܢܫܡܐ. ܒܟܠ ܒܒ̈ܢܝܐ ܕܒܢܝܬܐ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܠܡܫܬܒܚܘܬܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ
ܒܠܚܘܕ ܠܥܦܪܐ ܕܟܠ. ܗܘܒܠܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܦܐܪܐ ܕܚܕܘܬܐ ܢܦܫ
ܠܒܘܫܡܗ ܕܦܠܚ ܡܬܠܬܪܬܐ ܘܒܘܒܪ̈ܐ ܠܐܢܫܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܘܪܫܢܐ. ܐܠܐ
ܒܠܚܘܕ ܡܫܡܫܐ ܕܟܠܐ ܘܥܘܒܕܐ ❖

20. ܢܨܝܚ ܓܝܪ ܕܦܘܪܫܢܐ. ܟܕ ܢܦܫܗ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܡܫܥܐ. ܗܟܢܐ
ܒܫܝܢܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܠܐܫܬܘܬܐܘܢ ܡܫܬܒܚܝܢ: ܒܕܘܟܬܐ ܒܘܢܝܐ ܒܗܝܢ
ܡܬܐܡܪܝܢ. ܛܒ ܟܕ ܪܒܐ ܐܡܝܢܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܒܗ ܦܘܠܚܢܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܬܐ:
ܡܢ ܦܘܡܐ ܡܛܟܣܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܬܐ ܕܠܐܢܫ ܡܬܝܗܒܐ. ܫܦܝܪܐܝܬ ܦܪܚ
ܩܠܝܐ ܠܐܡܪܐ. ܒܕܡ ܦܐܪܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܢܩܫܡܐ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܚܡܝܢ. ܒܟܠ
ܐܩܠܝ ܡܢ ܚܕ ܦܬܘܪܐ ܐܣܘܗܝ ܫܟܠ ܚܪܐ. ܕܫܝܢܬܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ
ܚܪܐܬ ܐܓܠܐ ܡܫܬܡܥܝܢ. ܐܦ ܒܟܠ ܐܩܠܝ ܦܫܝܪܗ ܕܡܪܝ
ܘܡܬ̈ܐ ܕܡܢܗ ܠܐ ܫܘܐܬܐ ܐܡܪ ܫܒܝܚܐ. ܕܚܘܪܒܗܘܢ ܡܫܟܚ.
ܡܛܟܣܐ ܓܘܫ ܘܐܫܠܐ ܢܓܡܠܝ: ܘܢܡܪ ܠܡܫܒܝܚܐ ܢܓܡܬ ܒܟܠ.
ܒܦܘܪܫܢܐ ܘܡܘܟܟܐ ܛܒ ܕܢܪܗ ܒܟܠܟܝܢ: ܘܛܒܝܚ ܕܦܐܪܝ
ܦܘܠܚܢ ܒܒܠܬ ܚܪܗ ܡܬܐܫܝܡܝ ❖

21. There is no other evil which makes the intellect demonic and blind to the holy light, like one who reproaches his brother in his heart in any way whatever. This is the evil begetting total blindness in those who have it, as also love is the light uniting the one who possesses it to God the Light.[35] Who is blind and wanders in the desert? Anyone who hates and detracts his brother. For whoever loves God loves also his image,[36] and the enemy of his image is also truly his adversary. Whoever wishes to see God, let him love his image, that the true Prototype may be shown to him mystically in his soul.
22. Blessed is the one who always thinks of God, for also God reminds him always of those things whose remembrance does not come to his mind![37] Such a person is a true friend to whom God entrusts his mysteries as heir of his treasures. Thinking about God makes one godlike, as also thinking about bad things makes a Satan of the one who perseveres in it. The beauty of the soul is God; if then you wish to see him in your soul[38] for your great rejoicing, leave everything and without a thought establish in your soul concern for Him alone. You will be blessed then, because your sight will always be resplendent in the vision of Him!

[35] 1 Jn. 1:5.

[36] cf. Gen. 1:26–27.

[37] cf. 1 Cor. 2:9.

[38] To see his Glory, that is, not his Nature. On God's beauty (*šuprâ*) within the soul, see for example Letters 7.2 and 15.6. See also Sabino Chialà, *Giovanni di Dalyatha, Mostrami la tua bellezza* (Magnano, Italy: Edizioni Qiqajon, 1996). On the relation of God's beauty to his glory (*šûbhâ*), see Beulay, ES, 466–69.

21. ܘܠܐ ܚܕܐ ܡܢ ܒܝ̈ܫܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܚܒܪܐ ܠܗ ܠܡܘܥܠ ܫܠܝܐ ܘܡܫܡܠܐ
ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ: ܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܒܛܘܠ ܐܦ ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܒܠܒܗ
ܒܒܠܒܠܐ ܐܝܠܐ ܕܗܘ. ܗܘܐ ܗܘ ܒܝܫܬܐ ܢܟܪܝܐ ܟܠܐ ܫܡܫܘܬܐ
ܠܡܫܝܚܗ: ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܚܘܒܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܗܘ. ܘܠܐܝܠܐ ܕܐܚܝܕ ܠܗ
ܠܢܘܗܪܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܡܟܣܝ. ܒܝܘ ܒܥܘܪܐ ܘܛܥܝܐ ܒܠܘܩܠܐ: ܗܘ ܘܗܘ
ܕܦܝܠ ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܘܫܒܩܪ. ܕܪܢܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܐܦ ܠܪܥܝܢܗ ܪܢܐ.
ܘܫܡܥܬܐ ܕܪܥܝܢܗ: ܐܦ ܕܒܠܗ ܒܒܠܒܠܐ ܗܘ ܢܛܠܬܐ. ܡܢ
ܕܪܥܐ ܕܚܕܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ: ܢܐܡܪ ܠܪܥܝܢܗ: ܕܒܗ ܠܦܘܠܐ ܕܫܪܪܐ
ܒܪܐܪܐ ܒܒܫܡܗ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܀
22. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܥܡ ܕܪܢܐ ܒܒܠܒܝܢ ܥܠ ܐܠܗܐ: ܕܐܦ ܐܠܗܐ
ܒܒܠܒܝܢ ܦܩܘܕ ܠܗ: ܐܠܝܢ ܕܒܘܗܝܐ ܕܒܠܒܘܢ ܒܟܠ
ܡܕܒܗ ܠܐ ܦܠܓ. ܗܢܘ ܪܥܝܐ ܥܪܪܐ ܕܒܟܠ ܬܪܥܘܗܝ ܡܩܘܡܢ.
ܐܝܟ ܢܝܘܬܐ ܠܡܫܬܡܠܝܘ. ܪܥܝܐ ܕܥܠܐܠܗܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܟܕܒ
ܠܒܪܢܫܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܦ ܪܥܝܐ ܕܒܝ̈ܫܬܐ ܫܛܝܐ ܟܬܒ ܠܐܝܠܐ ܕܐܡܝܢ
ܒܗ. ܫܘܦܪܗ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܗܘ. ܐܝܟ ܪܥܝܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܗ
ܠܐܚܝܕܘܗܝ ܠܪܘܚ: ܡܬܘܡ ܒܠܒܝܢ ܘܡܪܢܝܬܗ ܒܠܒܘܗ
ܕܠܐ ܚܘܫܒ ܦܠܓܐ ܒܗ. ܘܛܘܒܝܢ ܕܒܝܕܘܗ ܚܙܝܗ ܒܒܠܒܝܢ
ܡܕܝܘܬܐ܀

PRAYER

1. O Beauty, which adorns all the Powers on High whose faces are always inflamed with the light of your glory through the intensity of the merciful radiance,[1] and to which they are joined by a supernal love: yes, my Lord, I beg You and entreat your mercy, make the light of your Holy Trinity shine in my soul, this light which with the intensity of its reflections the troops of the enemies are defeated. Then their eyes will be scorched from looking towards it, and with fear and trembling they will return to their darkened place, deprived of the radiance of eternal life.
2. My Lord, kindle in my soul the fire of your love: this fire by which all the supernal Powers are inflamed, this fire which destroys and consumes all tumult and sin. Loosen my soul from all and unite it to You in your mercy; and may nothing again be able to separate it from You forever and ever!
3. My Lord, breathe into my intellect the living breath of your Spirit, the Comforter, who is the Breath giving life to all the choirs of the angels of Light. Grant my intellect to remain always with them in the place of astonishment and wonder, in the unknowing which is higher than all doctrines and all those who are learned, and with them may it exalt your Eternal Being in delicate whispers, forever and ever! Amen.

(End of the fifty-one letters)

[1] Heb. 1:3; Christ, Splendor of the Father; see Letter 1.1.

∻ ܙܟܘܬܐ ∻

1. ܫܘܦܪܐ ܡܪܘܚܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܥ̈ܝܪܝ ܪܘܡܐ: ܕܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ
ܕܠܡܚܘܝܘܬܗ ܡܫܬܪܪ ܒܟܠܡܫ ܦܪ̈ܨܘܦܗܘܢ ܒܙܝܘܗ ܙܡܚܐ
ܪܚܡܬܐ: ܘܐܦ ܡܚܕܝܢ ܥܡܗ ܒܪܚܡܬܐ ܪܡܬܐ ܡܢ ܥ̈ܠܡܐ:
ܐܝܟ ܡܪܝ ܥܒܕܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܚܝ ܘܡܫܬܡܥ ܐܢܐ ܠܦܘܩ̈ܕܢܝܟ. ܐܘܕܝ
ܒܦܘܡܝ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܟ ܡܫܡܠܝܬܐ: ܗܘ ܕܡܢ ܥܒܪܘܬ
ܙܡܝ̈ܢܘܗܝ: ܡܫܠܛܝܢ ܡܫܪ̈ܝܬܗܘܢ ܕܒܟܠܒ̈ܪܝܬܐ. ܘܫܠܛ̈ܢܝ
ܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ ܡܢ ܕܢܦܩܘ ܠܥܒܕܘ: ܘܒܥܕܢܬܐ ܘܙܒܢܬܐ ܢܘܦܩܘܢ
ܠܐܬܪܘܗܝ ܢܦܫܐ ܫܒܝܩ ܡܢ ܙܕܩܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܠܥܠܡ ∻

2. ܡܪܝ ܫܒܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܦܘܡܝ ܢܘܪܐ ܕܙܡܚܬܟ: ܗܘ ܕܒܗ
ܡܬܩܠܣܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܢ̈ܝܫܘܬܐ ܪ̈ܡܝ ܡܢ ܥ̈ܠܡܐ: ܗܘ
ܕܗܘ ܡܬܩܠܣܐ ܘܡܫܬܡܥܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܫܒܝܚܘܬܐ ܘܣܓܝܕܬܐ.
ܘܫܡܪܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܘܢܛܪܗ ܠܢ ܒܦܘܩ̈ܕܢܝܟ: ܘܠܐ ܢܫܒܘܩ ܬܘܒ
ܡܕܡ ܕܡܢܟ ܢܦܫܘܩܗ ܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ∻

3. ܡܪܝ ܦܩܘܕ ܒܡܗܘܢ ܢܘܪܐ ܕܡܫܬܒܚܐ ܕܪܘܚ ܦܪܩܠܝܛܐ:
ܗܘ ܕܗܘܐ ܫܘܡܐ ܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܫܒܝܚܬܐ ܘܫܠܝܚܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ.
ܘܗܒ ܠܗ ܕܐܫܬܒܚܘܗܝ ܒܗܘܢ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܙܘܡܪܐ ܢܦܫܐ.
ܥܠ ܕܥܒܕܬ ܕܒܥܠܡܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܕܝܢ ܘܟܠ ܕܡܪܐ. ܘܫܒܘܚܬܗܘܢ
ܫ̈ܟܒܬܐ ܡܫܬܢܐ ܢܡܪܡ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܟ ܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ. ܠܥܠܡ
ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ ∻

ܫܠܡܝܢ ܐܓܪ̈ܬܐ ܚܡܫܝܢ ܘܚܕܐ ∻

APPENDIX

LETTER 41[1]

1. Receive grace and pray for me. With the gentle one[2] go up to the top of the mountain[3] and look with desire on the Sea of Life which separates into little springs to give drink to the reapers whom the Lord of the harvest has reaped for his harvest.[4] Glorify God and give praise, lest the streams return to discharge their usual Gihon.[5] Blessed is that one when the Sea with its strong currents pleases him; but woe to the ungrateful one who borrows continually, but does not remember to make restitution.[6]
2. Blessed is the one who loves to repay what he owes and also what is owed by wrongdoers of his kind. Because of this, even the borrowings of the unjust will be repaid by him, since he even repays their debts as soon as he is no longer indebted. Who can praise him except the One who is able to give all to whoever does not have enough for himself? Because of this the diligent one who gathers an abundant harvest fills his granary, but also sustains the needy at the time of affliction. His granaries will always be filled with all good things and his inner chambers will be filled with treasures. And those who eat his bread will be filled with rich food.[7] Joy will not fail those who drink from his cup and they will enjoy the harvest of his fruits for all eternity.

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[1] This Letter, while similar to John's style, only appears in two of the manuscripts. For this reason it has been placed in the Appendix.

[2] "Gentle one," according to Beulay, probably refers to Moses as his gentleness is mentioned in ascetical literature. And Moses was often taken as a model of the spiritual life; see Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses.*

[3] cf. Ex. 19:20.

[4] cf. Matt. 9:38; Lk. 10:2.

[5] cf. Gen. 2:13. See also Evag. Cent. I, 83 including reference to Jer. 2:18 identifying the Gihon as the Nile.

[6] Make restitution by glorifying God, as noted by Beulay.

[7] cf. Ps. 63:5; 147:14.

[ܬܘܒ] ܕܐܪܒܥܝܢ ܘܚܕܐ.

1. ܫܒܩ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܘܪܓܠܗ ܠܒܝ. ܘܥܡ ܟܫܝܪܐ ܫܦܝܪ ܠܒܪܢܫ ܛܘܪܐ. ܘܢܚܘܪ ܒܪܝܫܝܬܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܚܝܐ. ܕܡܢܗ ܡܬܒܥܝܐ ܠܒܘܪܐ ܦܪܝܫܝܢ. ܠܡܫܡܫܘ ܠܚܪܘܕܐ ܚܪܝܕܐ ܠܚܪܘܕܐ ܕܡܪܐ ܚܪܘܪܐ. ܘܦܫܚܢܘ ܘܦܠܚܘ. ܕܠܐ ܐܦ ܢܗܘܪܘܬܐ ܕܫܝܢ ܠܥܡܡܐ ܠܟܠܚܝܢ ܚܕܝܗܘܢ. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܗܘ ܕܒܝ ܗܢܐ ܒܦܩܕܘܗܝ ܦܩܘܕܐ ܠܗ. ܘܗܘ ܠܗ ܠܡܬܠܚܡܐ ܕܐܟܝܢ ܢܪܦ. ܘܠܡܦܪܢܣ ܠܐ ܟܗܢ ܀

2. ܛܘܒܘܗܝ ܠܓܒܪܐ ܕܢܛܪ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܒܬܚܘܡܐ ܒܢܡܘܣܗ. ܡܬܚܡܐ ܐܦ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ ܕܬܚܘܡܐ ܠܗ ܠܦܘܩܕܢ. ܕܐܦ ܢܬܒܥܘܢ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܚܢܘ ܦܪܫ. ܕܡܢܗ ܦܩܕ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܢܦܩܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܦܩܕ ܕܟܠܗ ܕܠܐ ܦܩܕ ܠܗ ܕܢܠܗ ܢܦܩܘܢ ܠܗ. ܡܬܠܟܕܐ ܒܫܒܪܐ ܕܦܫܝܛ ܚܕܐ ܐܕܪܗ ܦܠܐ. ܘܐܦ ܠܫܒܝܠܐ ܦܫܝܢ ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܚܐ. ܐܘܪܚܬܗܘܢ ܕܗܢܐ ܢܬܒܥܘܢ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܛܒܝܢ. ܘܐܬܝܗܘܢ ܫܒܝܠܐ ܢܬܒܥܘܢ ܫܒܝܠܐ. ܘܐܟܒܝ ܠܫܡܗ ܢܬܒܥܘܢ ܕܗܘܢܐ. ܘܡܬܩܠܣ ܡܢ ܐܢܫܘ ܠܐ ܢܦܫܗ ܚܘܬܐ. ܘܗܘ ܒܗܢܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܟܠ ܒܒܥܘ ܢܬܟܫܦܘܢ ܀

3. Be amazed, my brother, that these things are spoken by one who is mute. But do not be astonished! Because the One who put his fingers in the ears of the dumb man and touched his tongue[8] has effected this. If you say: "This letter is demoniacal!," know that it is not so, even if it is written down by a demoniac—the One who casts out demons composed it.

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[8] cf. Mk. 7:32–33.

3. ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܝܢܝܬܐ ܗܟܢܐ. ܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܠܐܬܕܡܪ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗ̇ܘ
ܕܚܒܫ ܩ̈ܕܠܗܘܢ ܒܐܝܕ̈ܝܗܘܢ ܕܦܐܝܐ ܘܡܕܒܪ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ: ܗܘ̇ ܗܘ
ܐܒܘܢ. ܐܦ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܗܘܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܗܘ. ܕܒܗ ܒܗ
ܕܠܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ. ܕܐܦ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܒܗ ܒܗ. ܐܠܐ ܡܢܗ ܕܝܠܗ ܐܒܗܬܐ ܀

LETTER 48[1]

[Letter of a solitary: To one of the diligent brothers on the various operations of grace which occur to those who labor.
Reader recollect your mind!]

1. I read the mystery which was hidden in your letter, O diligent laborer, and my soul was covered with joy and unspeakable rejoicing.
2. Beloved, you wrote me: "I see the sun when it sometimes ascends to its zenith; but all the firmament is full of stars and their light hides the light of the sun, so that it is not visible. Then I see the sun without the stars because its light hides the beautiful light of the stars and they are not seen. Sometimes I see the light of the stars without seeing the light of the sun and sometimes I see the moon's sphere while it also is utterly full of stars. And other times I see it stripped of stars and it stands alone."[2]
3. You are in doubt concerning all of this and whether you might be seeing something not authentic, as I learned from reading your letter. So you have asked me to write of the mysteries of these operations in a letter and send it to you. O beloved brother, having truly seen your humility I obey your love, and I write about these operations to inform you concerning these mysteries, from my own experience and from the report of reliable people who are trustworthy.

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[1] According to Beulay, the doctrine in this Letter and in the following one indicate Joseph Hazzaya to be the author; see Beulay, *Collection des Lettres*, 295–296. Many of the theological aspects in Letters 48 and 49 are found typically in the writings of Joseph Hazzaya, but are absent from John of Dalyatha's work. Moreover the didactic style of these Letters is very different from the lyrical quality of John's writing.

[2] cf. Evag., Cent. II, 90.

ܕܐܬ̈ܒܥܝ ܘܐܬܩܛܠ: ܠܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܕܠܘܬܗ ܕܚܣܝܐ. ܕܠܘܬܗ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܐܒ̈ܗܐ ܒܥܒ̈ܪܐ: ܟܠܗ ܡܘܕܥܢܘܬܐ ܡܡܠܠܢܘܬܐ ܕܝܠܝܕܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܡ ܟܠܗ ܦܠܘܓܘܬܐ. ܦܪܘܫ ܒܝܘܡ ܗܘܢ.

1. ܕܐܬܐ ܕܓܫܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܠܚܘܕܝ ܡܪܝܟ ܐܒ̄ ܦܠܘܚܐ ܒܥܒܪܐ: ܘܐܬܝܠܕܬܟ ܢܦܫ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܘܪܘܙܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܦܠܠܐ ܀
2. ܓܠܒ ܠܟ ܥܒܪ ܚܘܒܝ ܕܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܫܡܫܐ ܒܝ ܦܠܘܚ ܒܪܘܚ ܠܬܪܐ ܒܟܠܗ. ܘܪܘܚܒܐ ܒܠܗܘ ܕܝܠܐ ܒܩܕܡܐ. ܘܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܡܢܗܪܐ ܠܒܗܘܪܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܐ. ܘܐܬܐ ܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܫܡܫܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܩܕܡܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܡܢܗܪܐ ܢܘܗܪܗ ܠܒܗܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܦܪܐ ܕܒܩܕܡܐ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܢ. ܘܒܪܡ ܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܒܗܘܪܐ ܕܒܩܕܡܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܫܡܫܐ. ܘܒܪܡ ܠܐܣܦܪܗ ܕܒܗܪܐ ܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ: ܒܝ ܐܦ ܗܘ ܡܟܠܐ ܒܩܕܡܐ ܒܠܗ. ܘܒܪܡ ܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ: ܒܝ ܡܦܟܠܐ ܡܢ ܒܩܕܡܐ: ܘܦܫܛܐ ܗܘ ܒܠܚܘܕܝܗ ܀
3. ܘܟܠܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܡܬܦܠܓܢ ܐܠܐ: ܕܠܗ ܥܪܘܐ ܚܙܐ ܐܠܐ: ܐܝܟ ܕܢܦܩܬ ܡܢ ܡܪܝܡ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܝ. ܘܦܫܛܐ ܦܪܚܬ ܠܟ ܕܬ̈ܐܪܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܡܡܠܠܢܘܬܐ ܐܬܠܘܒ ܒܝܢ ܠܐܚܪܬܐ ܘܐܦܪܘܩ ܠܟܘܢ. ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܐܒ̄ ܢܦܩܬ: ܒܝ ܢܦܩܬ ܦܩܒܘܠܝ: ܡܬܠܡܕ ܐܢܐ ܠܚܘܒܟܘܢ. ܒܝ ܡܥܘܗܝ ܕܡܡܠܠܢܘܬܐ ܗܠܝܢ: ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܒܪܐ ܠܟܠܢ: ܘܡܥܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܓܘܫܡܐ ܕܐܢܫܐ ܥܒܪܐ ܕܐܬܓܠܝܬ ܠܟܠܐ ܬ̈ܐܪܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܠܝܢ: ܦܠܓ ܐܢܐ ܘܦܘܪܫ ܐܢܐ ܠܚܘܒܟܘܢ܀

4. In a pure heart, and in an intellect which have arrived at the place[3] of Limpidity, the operations of grace are many and varied. Because of this, all the operations which you first narrated correspond to the three states when the mind is found in knowledge: one is that of purity without passibility of soul; another is the limpidity of the mind; as to the third, its operation is higher than Purity and Limpidity.[4]
5. Concerning what you said, that you see the sun rising sometimes to its zenith and that it is full of stars whose lights are more intense than the light of the sun: this operation is higher than Purity or Limpidity because it is the vision of the light of the Holy Trinity. As to the stars which are visible to you in that place whose intensity is greater than the light of the sun: these are the insights of the New World which because of their subtlety are not able to be put in words. They receive light only from the sun, and the sun from their light is visible to the intellect. But at that moment, its disk which is the vision of our Savior is not visible, because the intellect is astonished by the light of the vision of the stars, these stars being the cause of the sun's vision in the firmament of the heart at this time.
6. You said that you see the sun without stars, because the beauty of its light surpasses the stars which are not visible at that moment. This operation is more excellent than the former one, since here it is the sphere of the Sun of Righteousness which is visible to the intellect; it stands in amazement so that no insight stirs in it, neither concerning the Economy of Our Lord, nor concerning the mystery of the New World. But it is the light of the glory of Our Lord which is visible to the intellect.
7. These are the two operations of the place which is above nature.

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[3] In this Letter, Joseph refers to the three places (*atrâwâtê*): Purity (*dakyûtâ*); Limpidity (*šapyûtâ*); Perfection (*gmîrûtâ*), not spiritual perfection, but more like a fullness (*šumlâyâ*) of the mystical life. These places are connected to the three levels (*taksê*) inherited from John the Solitary; see Letter 20.4. The level of the body leads to Purity; the level of the soul to Limpidity; the level of the spirit to Perfection. See Robert Beulay, "Joseph Hazzaya," *DSpir* 8 (1974): 1341–1349. See also P. Harb, "Doctrine Spirituel," 225–60.

[4] Limpidity (*šapyûtâ*), see Letter 4.5. As in many other instances, the use of *šapyûtâ* by Joseph Hazzaya becomes more precise, even technical, than the use made of it by John of Dalyatha: a difference of style not of substance.

4. ܒܟܐ ܕܟܐ܆ ܘܗܘܝܐ ܕܐܬܦܬܚ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܢܦܩܘܬܐ܆ ܫܒܝ̈ܠܐ ܒܗ
ܡܥܕܪ̈ܢܘܬܐ ܕܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܒܡܫܡܠܝܘܬܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܥܕܪ̈ܢܘܬܐ
ܕܐܟܠ ܡܕܡ܆ ܒܦܘܐ ܠܟܠ ܡܘܩܣܬܗ ܘܡܕܒܪܐ ܒܡܕܒܪܬܐ
ܐܠܗܝܢ. ܚܕܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܕܕܟܝܘܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܡܘܣܘܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ. ܘܐܣܪܬܐ
ܕܢܦܩܘܬܐ ܕܡܕܒܪܐ. ܗܘ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܠܗܐ܆ ܒܟܠ ܡܢ ܕܟܝܘܬܐ
ܘܡܦܩܘܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬ ܡܥܒܕܢܘܬܗ ܀

5. ܗܘ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܬ ܕܢܚܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܐ ܒܗ ܫܒܥ ܒܪܡܫ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܒܟܒܐ܆
ܘܡܛܠ ܟܘܟ̈ܒܐ ܕܚܙܝܬ ܢܘܗܪܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ܆ ܗܕܐ
ܡܥܒܕܢܘܬܐ ܗܝ ܕܒܟܠ ܡܢ ܕܟܝܘܬܐ ܘܡܦܩܘܬܐ܆ ܗܘ ܕܐܠܗܐ
ܚܙܬܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܟܠܝܠܘܬܐ ܡܕܡܝܬܐ. ܒܟܘܟ̈ܒܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܬܚܙܝܢ ܠܟܢ
ܒܗܘ ܐܬܪܐ܆ ܕܚܙܝܬܗܘܢ ܙܥܪ ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ܆ ܫܒܝ̈ܠܐ ܐܝܟ
ܕܟܘܟܒܐ ܚܕܬܐ. ܗܢܘܢ ܕܡܛܠ ܡܛܝܒܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܐ ܐܬܝܢ ܠܙܘܥܐ
ܕܟܠܬܐ. ܒܚܘܫ ܡܬܢܗܪܝܢ ܡܢ ܫܡܫܐ. ܘܫܡܫܐ ܡܢ ܢܘܗܪܐ
ܕܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܚܙܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ. ܒܗܘ ܒܠܠܝܐ ܕܝܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܢܗܪܝܢ ܐܣܛܪ̈ܘܗ
ܘܐܠܗܐ ܚܙܬܗ ܕܦܪܘܩ. ܡܛܠ ܕܡܬܟܬܒܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܚܙܬܐ
ܕܒܢܘܗܪܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܟܢ ܒܟܘܟ̈ܒܐ ܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ ܒܟܠܠܐ ܠܚܙܬܗ
ܘܫܡܫܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܟܠܐ܆ ܒܗܘܝܐ ܟܒܝܐ ܀

6. ܗܘ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܬ ܕܢܚܐ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܐ ܕܠܐ ܟܘܟ̈ܒܐ܆ ܡܛܠ ܕܪܒܐ
ܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܗ ܠܟܘܟ̈ܒܐ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܢ ܒܗܘ ܟܒܝܐ܆ ܗܕܐ
ܡܥܒܕܢܘܬܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܫܬܪܐ ܗܝ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܡܕܡܝܬܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܪܟܐ
ܗܘ ܐܫܦܪܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ ܕܕܝܘܬܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ. ܘܩܐܡ
ܠܥܠܡܐ܆ ܐܡܬܝ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܚܙܐ ܒܗ ܫܡܫܐ. ܠܐ ܕܟܠ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܗ
ܕܡܢ܆ ܐܦܠܐ ܙܥܪܐ ܕܟܘܟܒܐ ܚܕܬܐ. ܐܠܐ ܗܘ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܫܘܦܪܗ ܕܡܢ
ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܀

7. ܗܟܢ ܠܐܬܪܝܢ ܡܥܕܪ̈ܢܘܬܐ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܕܒܟܠ ܡܢ ܟܢܫܐ ܀

On the second operation of grace in the intellect

8. The stars then, O my brother, which you said you see without the light of the sun: this is the place of Purity which is called "impassibility[5] of the soul." The stars are the insights of the natures of creatures.[6] Their manifestation within the intellect is caused by the reading of the Scriptures, the teaching of others and the Guardian Angel. Briefly, these stars are the operation of natural seeds[7] which our fathers called the second natural contemplation.[8] In this place, the disk of the sun is not visible, but only its light.

On the third operation of grace in the intellect

9. Concerning the moon, you said that its disk is sometimes visible while full of stars: this is incorporeal contemplation[9] which appears in the place of Limpidity. As for the stars with which it is filled, this is an operation of the soul's second sense which receives insights of understanding from the stars. At this moment, there is an operation of the first sense and of the second, because the first is a vision of the light of the sphere, but the stars are an operation of the second sense.
10. And at another time, when you see the sphere of the moon stripped of stars: this is contemplation visible to the intellect without insights, that is, without an operation of the second sense, but only of the first. Indeed, the operation in which the sphere of the moon is filled with stars is much higher than that one in which it is stripped of stars.

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[5] Impassibility (*lâ ḥâšôšûtâ/apatheia*), the concept originates in Evagrius and is found mostly in Joseph Hazzaya, Isaac of Nineveh, Shemʿon the Graceful, and Dadisho. In John the term occurs only once, see note # 9 in Letter 37. Joseph often uses it in the context of purity (*dakyûtâ*) and limpidity (*šapyûtâ*), terminology received from John the Solitary. See Beulay, LM, 21–23.

[6] Evag., Cent. 3:21; Cent. 1:27; Cent. 1:70.

[7] Evag., Cent. 1:40.

[8] Evag., Cent. 3:84.

[9] Evag., Cent. 1:27; Cent. 3:52.

ܥܠ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܕܬܪ̈ܬܝܢ ܕܐܬܝܗܒܬ ܒܡܘܫܐ.

8. ܒܡܘܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܬ ܐ̄ܘ ܐܚܝ: ܕܢܚܙܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܢܗܘܪܘܢ ܕܚܫܘܟܐ: ܗܘܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܕܡܘܬܐ: ܗܢܘ ܕܡܬܐܡܪ ܠܐ ܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ. ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ ܐܬܝܗܘܢ ܫܒ̈ܝܠܐ ܕܚܝ̈ܐ ܕܚܟܡܬܐ. ܗܠܝܢ ܕܒܠܒܐ ܕܡܬܢܗܪܢܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܗܝܢ ܗܘܝܐ ܐܝܠܝܢ. ܡܪ̈ܝܐ ܕܫܠܝ̈ܐ ܘܡܫܬܥܒܕܐ ܕܡܢ ܐܢ̈ܫܐ ܘܡܢ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܕܛܥܝܘܬܐ. ܘܕܒܥܠܕܒ̈ܒܘܬܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܗܝ ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ ܒܝܡܐ. ܗܠܝܢ ܕܐܒܗ̈ܝܢ ܡܫܡܫܝܢ ܠܗܘܢ: ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܒܝܫܬܐ ܕܬܪ̈ܬܝܢ. ܒܗܘܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܐܗܦܪܘܗ ܕܚܫܘܟܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܦ ܢܗܘܪܘܗ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܀

ܥܠ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܕܬܠܬ ܕܐܬܝܗܒܬ ܒܡܘܫܐ.

9. ܗܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܬ ܕܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܒܝܬ ܐܗܦܪܘܗ ܒܗ ܡܟܝܠ ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ: ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܠܐ ܥܒܕܝܢ ܐܝܠܝܢ: ܕܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܦܨܘܬܐ. ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܟܝܠ: ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܗܝ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ: ܕܡܫܡܠܐ ܫܒ̈ܝܠܐ ܕܡܚܝܠܬܐ ܡܢܗܘܢ. ܒܗܘܐ ܒܝܕܐ ܐܝܟ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܠܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ ܡܢܝܐ ܘܠܐܘܪܚܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܡܢܝܐ: ܐܬܝܗ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܢܗܘܪܐ ܕܐܗܦܪܐ. ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ ܕܝܢ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܕܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܀

10. ܘܒܗܝܢ ܬܘܒ ܕܢܚܙܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܐܗܦܪܘܗ ܕܗܫܐ ܕܡܫܬܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ: ܒܗܘܐ ܒܝܕܐ ܗܝܕܝܢ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܗܝܢ ܫܒ̈ܝܠܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܠܗ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܠܒܢ̈ܝܢܫܐ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ. ܐܠܐ ܠܡܕܡܐ ܒܠܚܘܕ. ܦܝܫ ܗܢܝܢ ܡܫܬܒܚܐ ܡܥܡܕܝܘܬܐ ܕܡܟܝܠ ܐܗܦܪܘܗ ܕܗܫܐ ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ: ܡܢ ܗܝ ܕܡܫܬܒܚܐ ܡܢ ܒܡܘ̈ܫܐ ܀

11. Moreover, in that first place, the intellect appears clothed in the light without form.[10] While in the second, the vision of the soul becomes one of fire. In this third place, the intellect at the moment of prayer appears covered with crystalline light which our Fathers call "the place of Limpidity."
12. Furthermore, O beloved of my soul, at the time of prayer the soul appears like a sapphire[11] or tinted the color of heaven, and this vision is of the natural place. Sometimes the integrity of the intellect appears mixed with light and fire. And this vision is of the place of Limpidity. Again, the integrity of the intellect at the time of prayer appears similar to the light of the sun, and this vision is of that place which is above nature. This is what holy Evagrius says: "The intellect at times changes from insight to insight, and from contemplation to contemplation, and again, from the vision of contemplation it rises to the vision of the light without form."[12]
13. When all of these gifts pass through your mind, know that you are standing in the place of Limpidity, that place which our Fathers call "Promised Land." The first appearance is the vision of the contemplation of corporeal realities which is joined to the vision of Purity; that which is mixed with light and fire is the vision of the place of Limpidity, this is the vision of incorporeal contemplation; as to the solar vision, it is the vision of the light of the Trinity.

[10] Light without form (*nuhrâ dlâ dmû*), see Letter 51.7.

[11] Sapphire, see Letter 17.2.

[12] cf. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus*, Pseudo-supplement # 23, 444. See also "Chapters on Prayer" # 68 in Bamberger, *Evagrius*, 66.

11. ܘܬܘܒ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ ܡܬܝܕܥܐ ܗܘܝܐ. ܟܕ ܠܒܝܫ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܡܘܬ. ܒܗܘ ܕܝܢ ܐܬܪܐ: ܢܗܝܪܘܬܐ ܗܘܬ ܚܙܬܗ ܕܫܡܫܐ. ܒܗܘܝܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܠܗܝܐ: ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܦܪܘܛܘܦܠܣܛܘܣ ܡܬܝܕܥܐ ܕܐܬܚܙܝ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܟܝܢ ܙܒܢܐ. ܗܘ ܕܡܦܩܢܘܢ ܠܗ ܐܒܗ̈ܝܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܕܦܪܕܝܣܐ ܀

12. ܬܘܒ ܕܝܢ ܐܘ̄ ܚܒܝܒ ܢܦܫܝ. ܒܟܝܢܐ ܕܙܒܢܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܟܕ ܕܡܝܐ ܠܦܦܝܠܐ ܐܘ ܠܓܘܠܐ ܕܒܪܘܡܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ. ܘܗܘܝܐ ܚܕܘܬ: ܕܐܬܪܐ ܒܢܝܢܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ. ܘܒܬܪܟ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܟܕ ܡܬܩܪܒܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܒܢܘܪܐ. ܘܗܘܝܐ ܚܕܘܬ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܦܪܕܝܣܐ. ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܬܘܒ ܠܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܒܟܝܢ ܙܒܢܐ ܟܕ ܕܡܝܐ ܠܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܫܡܫܐ. ܘܗܘܝܐ ܚܕܘܬ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܒܢܝܐ. ܘܗܕܐ ܗܝ ܕܐܡܪ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܓܪܝܓܘܪܝܘܣ. ܕܗܘܝܐ ܒܪܝܟ ܡܦܩܐ ܡܢ ܫܘܒܠܐ ܠܫܘܒܠܐ: ܘܡܢ ܬܐܘܪܝܐ ܠܬܐܘܪܝܐ. ܘܬܘܒ ܡܢ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܬܐܘܪܝܐ: ܠܚܙܬܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܡܘܬ ܡܬܟܠܠܐ.

13. ܡܛܠ ܕܝܢ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܫܘ̈ܒܠܐ ܓܒܪܝܢ ܒܡܕܒܪܢ: ܕܐܦ ܒܐܬܪܐ ܕܦܪܕܝܣܐ ܩܐܡ ܐܢܐ. ܗܘ ܕܡܦܩܢܘܢ ܠܗ ܐܒܗ̈ܝܢ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܡܘܠܟܢܐ. ܚܕܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܬܐܘܪܝܐ ܕܓܘ̈ܫܡܐ: ܗܝ ܕܢܦܩܐ ܠܚܕܘܬܐ ܕܕܒܘܪܐ. ܗܝ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܬܩܪܒܐ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܒܢܘܪܐ ܐܝܬܝܗ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܕܦܪܕܝܣܐ: ܗܝ ܕܐܝܬܝܗ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܬܐܘܪܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܓܘܫܡ. ܗܝ ܕܝܢ ܚܙܬܐ ܡܫܡܫܢܝܬܐ: ܐܝܬܝܗ ܚܙܬܐ ܕܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܠܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ ܀

14. See then, my beloved, as far as it could be revealed, we have revealed the mystery of these operations before you. There are various operations of grace which occur in the soul and are not able to be set down in writing: only the person who is purified from passions receives them in fact in his soul. O our precious beloved, obtain for yourself humility and love,[13] fasting, prayer, and night vigils, with faith and endurance in afflictions. And pray to Our Lord that He make you a haven of love and an abode for the gifts of his operations. Pray also for us with love, that Our Lord complete our struggle according to his will. Amen.

[13] Beginning with an ascetical approach to humility and charity, one may arrive with grace at universal love and perfect humility. See Beulay, *ES*, 369–79. In Discourse 5, John opens with this prayer: "O Good One who has never been angry, who by thy kindness bears with all our faults in tranquility without vexation, fill our heart with thy tranquility and love without distinction and the Evil One will be unable to disturb it." See Discourse 5, "On anger, distraction, distress and pride." V. 291a.

14. ܗܘ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܢܝܚܝܐ ܕܡܐ ܕܡܬܓܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܪܐܙܐ ܕܒܠܒܝ
ܡܫܡ̈ܠܝܘܬܐ ܓܠܝܢ ܡܕܡ. ܐܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܦܘܫܟ ܡܫܡ̈ܠܝܘܬܐ
ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܘܢ ܒܦܫܛܐ: ܕܠܐ ܡܕܝܐ ܕܠܐܬܪ̈ܘܨ ܒܡܠܬܢܬܐ.
ܒܠܚܘܕ ܟܠܐ ܕܡܬܕܢܐ ܡܢ ܢ̈ܫܐ ܡܫܦܚܠܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܒܦܫܛܗ
ܒܒܥܪܐ. ܐܠܐ ܗܘܦܟܐ ܐܘ̄ ܢܝܚܝܢ ܘܫܦܝܐ: ܡܢܚ ܠܟܝ
ܦܪܨܘܦܐ ܘܫܘܚܐ. ܘܙܘܡܐ ܘܙܒܠܬܐ. ܘܡܗܘܪܐ ܕܒܪ̈ܟܬܐ. ܚܝܝ
ܦ̇ܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܘܡܦܠܚܢܘܬܐ ܕܐܘܪ̈ܚܐ. ܘܙܠܐ ܠܟܘܪ ܕܒܠܒܝ ܠܗ
ܠܡܓܐܠܐ ܕܫܘܚܐ. ܘܐܘܪܚܐ ܠܡܘܘܢ ܡܫܡ̈ܠܝܘܬܗ. ܘܒܠܚܘܕ
ܒܫܘܚܐ ܙܠܐ. ܕܢܫܬܠܐ ܡܢܝ ܠܒܘܟ ܐܝܟ ܒܥܝܘܬܗ ܐܡܝܢ ❖

LETTER 49[1]

[Another letter to one of his friends,
on the same operations[2] of grace.
Reader, understand, marvel and give praise to Jesus our God!]

1. Blessed be God, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has revealed the mystery of his love in our heart and has made the insight of his grace to shine in our mind.
2. I heard about you, O man of God, from dear brothers who came to us, that you have great love for us in Our Lord. And from reading your letter I have perceived that this is so. Because of the fine testimony about you, I wanted to meld my love with yours and to write to you these things which you asked of our deficiency.
3. My lord, know that certain of the visions which you had are genuine, but others are an appearance full of deceit from the sham of error. Because you dwell far away and it is not easy for you to come to us, I wanted to tell you by letter of the vision of these operations.
4. As to what you said: "Sometimes I stand and watch my soul and no thought has stirred in it; neither right ones, nor accusing ones.[3] But the intellect is immersed within the soul without any operation, nor even a lisping of praise. Only quiet reigns over all the stirrings of the body and of the soul, such that neither reading nor chanting a psalm gives pleasure. And the intellect only receives nourishment from within, whereby also the body is nourished."

[1] Authorship, Joseph Hazzaya: see Letter 48, note 1.
[2] Operations (*ma,bdânûtê*), see Beulay, ES, 146–149; 191–194.
[3] Accusing ones, possibly refers to Satan the accuser (Rev. 12:10).

ܕܐܬܒܥܝ ܘܐܬܦܢܝ: ܐܟܪܙܬܐ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܠܘܬ ܐܝܟ ܡܢ ܡܐܬܝܬܗܘܢ.
ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܒܗ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܡܬܟܬܒܢܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܠܡܟܬܒܘܬܐ: ܦܪܘܫܐ
ܐܫܬܡܠܝ ܘܢܛܪ ܘܐܘܕܝ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ.

1. ܪܥܝܢ ܗܘ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܕܡܪܢ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ: ܕܟܠܐ ܙܪܐܐ
ܕܝܘܒܠܗ ܒܟܠܢ: ܘܐܘܕܥ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܒܥܡܡܐ ❖
2. ܦܫܩܘ ܒܟܠܢܝܢ ܐܘ ܒܢܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ: ܡܢ ܐܢܬܐ ܚܟܝܡܐ ܕܐܬܘ ܙܕܝܩ:
ܕܗܘܝܬ ܚܘܒܐ ܩܕܡ ܐܢܬ ܠܘܬܟ ܒܡܪܝ. ܘܡܢ ܡܪܢܝܢ ܕܐܠܟܪܙܬ
ܐܦܠܘܓܘܬ ܕܗܘܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܗܘ. ܘܡܛܠ ܫܘܪܝܐ ܦܫܝܪܬܐ
ܕܟܠܢܝ: ܙܕܩܬ ܕܐܬܠܘܬ ܚܘܒܐ ܒܚܘܒܝ: ܘܐܬܠܘܒ ܠܟܝ
ܐܚܝܢ ܕܡܬܠܛܠ ܡܢ ܒܪܝܬܝ ❖
3. ܕܘܝܫ ܢܦܫ ܐܘ ܡܪܝ: ܕܡܫܝܚܘܢ ܕܚܙܘܐ ܕܗܘܘ ܒܠܒܝ: ܫܪܪܐ ܐܝܟ.
ܘܡܫܝܚܘܢ ܐܫܬܡܥܬ ܗܘ ܕܒܠܐ ܕܐܪܥܐ ܕܛܒܥܝܢ. ܡܛܠ ܛܟܪ
ܕܪܚܡ ܢܠܒܝ ܡܢ ܠܘܬܟ: ܘܡܬܬܠܬܠ ܕܙܕܝܩ ܠܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܠܝ.
ܙܕܩܬ ܕܟܠܟܪܙܬܐ ܐܘܕܥܬܘܢ ܠܝ ܠܚܝܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܠܝ ܡܟܬܒܢܘܬܐ ❖
4. ܗܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܡܪܬ: ܕܩܐܡ ܐܢܐ ܒܬܪܥ ܐܪܥ ܘܢܩܫ ܐܢܐ ܒܢܩܫܐ: ܘܠܐ
ܪܦܐ ܒܗ ܚܘܫܒܐ ܠܐ ܕܒܐܘܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܕܒܡܘܠܐ: ܐܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܕܒܥܝܢ
ܠܟܝܢܗ ܡܢܗ ܒܝ ܒܟܠ ܒܗ ܡܬܒܥܝܢܘܬܐ: ܘܐܦܠܐ ܒܡܘܒܚܐ
ܡܠܟܝܟܝ: ܐܠܐ ܠܝ ܕܦܫܩܬ ܒܟܢܫܝ ܢܢܫܐ ܒܠܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ
ܘܐܟܠ ܕܦܓܪܐ ܘܢܦܫܐ: ܐܚܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܪܢܐ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܡܘܪܐ ܗܘܝ ܒܗ
ܒܡܬܐܡܪ. ܘܗܘܐ ܒܟܢܫܝ ܡܫܡܠܐ ܫܒܪܬܐ ܡܢ ܟܝܢܗ: ܕܡܢܗ
ܡܬܬܪܫܐ ܐܦ ܦܓܪܐ.

5. As long as the intellect remains in this place, O my brother, this state is much better than all the different actions[4] which occur in the soul. And those who are wise say that in this state, food is given in a hidden way to the intellect by the Holy Spirit, and also the body is nourished by it and does not require its usual food. Thus the immersion of the intellect in this state is the same as that of blessed Moses on the top of Mt. Sinai. As long as you are in this state, do not desire reading or the office of the psalms, but only keep your intellect in purity—that is, do not leave this stillness in any way at all; and if possible, on the days that you remain in this condition, do not meet with anyone, nor even listen to the sound of a bird, if possible. But enter your inner cell, shut all the doors, and be certain about what comes to pass in you.
6. But when this state passes from you, the state of the operation of insights comes after it. Here watch out for the demon of distraction! As long as insights appear in the intellect from within, keep silence and keep the rule of the previous state. But if the intellect has begun to wander after insights from outside of it, while depicting images and devising insights, let go of the previous rule and continue with psalms, reading, and prostration before the cross.[5] Stand valiantly and mightily and do not let the intellect go out the inner door of its heart, lest it lose its life from wandering thoughts.

[4] Actions (*sâʿôrûtê*).

[5] On prayer before the cross, see Letter 13.2.

.5 ܟܡܐ ܕܒܗܘܐ ܐܬܪܐ ܩܐܡ ܗܘܐ ܐܚ: ܦܢܝ ܡܠܬܪ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ
ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܕ̈ܝܢܬܐ ܕܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܝܢ ܒܟܠ ܢܦܫܐ.
ܘܐܡܪܝܢ ܚܕ̈ܟܠܝܐ. ܘܒܗܘܐ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ ܡܫܒܪܬܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܢܐ ܠܗ
ܒܗܘܐ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܘܕܝܐ ܒܡܫܝܚܐ. ܕܐܦ ܦܝܪܐ ܡܢܗ
ܡܬܬܪܣܐ: ܘܠܐ ܫܒܩ ܟܠ ܫܒܪܬܐ ܕܢܫܡܠܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘܐ
ܡܡܡܘܕܝܬܐ ܕܟܕܒ ܒܗ ܗܘܐ ܒܗܘܐ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ: ܗܘ ܐܠܗܐ
ܗܘ ܕܟܕܒ ܒܗ ܬܘܒܐ ܡܘܡܐ: ܟܠ ܪܡ ܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܝܢ.
ܟܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܗܘܐ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ ܩܐܡ ܐܝܬ. ܠܐ ܬܬܐܢܚ ܟܠ ܡܪܝܐ
ܘܟܠ ܬܫܡܫܬܐ ܘܡܕܡܘܪܬܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܟܢܘܫ ܒܗܘܐ ܬܪ
ܒܕܒܘܬܐ. ܗܘܘ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܕܟܠܐ ܒܟܠ ܒܟܠܗ ܠܐ ܬܦܘܩ. ܘܐܝ
ܡܕܝܐ ܒܗܘܟܝܢ ܢܩܡܬܐ ܕܒܗܘܐ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ ܩܐܡ ܐܝܬ: ܒܐܝܫ ܠܐ
ܬܦܠܝܢ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܦܠܐ ܕܦܪܝܫܬܐ ܬܫܡܫ ܠܝ ܡܕܝܐ. ܐܠܐ ܒܟܠ
ܠܫܟܠܠܝܢ ܫܘܠܬܐ ܘܫܒܘܪ ܬܪ̈ܥܐ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ. ܘܗܘܘ ܡܫܬܪܪ
ܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܡܫܬܟܚ ܟܠܗܝܢ ✧

.6 ܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܥܪ ܡܢܗ ܗܘܐ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ: ܐܬܐ ܒܠܬܪܗ ܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ
ܘܡܬܚܕܢܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܥܠܐ. ܗܪܟܐ ܐܪܥܗܪ ܡܢ ܫܠܘܐ ܕܦܘܪܐ. ܟܡܐ
ܥܒܪ ܕܫܡܥܠܐ ܒܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܠܦܝܫܘ ܕܢܚܡ: ܬܪ ܕܟܠܐ ܘܡܕܝܢܬܐ
ܕܡܘܣܠܡܢܐ ܡܕܝܢܐ. ܐܝܟ ܫܪܝ ܗܘܐ ܠܡܬܬܠܐ ܒܠܬܪ ܫܡܥܠܐ
ܕܠܥܪ ܡܢܗ: ܒܪ ܙܪܪ ܕܩܘܡܬܐ ܘܡܪܒܒ ܫܡܥܠܐ: ܫܪܝ ܠܡܗܘܝܐ
ܡܕܝܢܐ: ܘܐܡܟ ܒܡܕܡܘܪܬܐ ܘܡܪܝܐ ܘܡܬܬܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܡ ܙܟܠܝܐ.
ܘܡܘܡ ܟܠܥܪܐܬܐ ܘܢܬܟܠܬܐ: ܘܠܐ ܬܫܒܘܩ ܒܗܘܐ ܕܫܘܡ
ܠܥܪ ܡܢ ܬܪܥܐ ܟܗܢܐ ܕܟܠܗ. ܕܠܐ ܢܘܒܕ ܚܬܘܗܝ ܒܫܘܡܐ
ܕܢܩܡܬܐ ✧

7. If the intellect is kept from wandering thoughts, after this state of insights comes the state of the love of psalms and of reading. Then, the flame of the psalms and reading so burns within the heart that if possible, even when one is seated to take nourishment, the intellect is occupied from within with psalms and reading. To this state is mixed the activity of vainglory. But when you recite the psalms or read, search your mind and see whether you recite for the love of God, or if other images are represented in your mind when it does its office of the psalms and its reading.
8. Then, after this state of reading and psalms comes another state, if the intellect is free from thoughts of vain glory: it is the gushing of tears[6] and continual prostrating before the cross. These tears are not forced, nor may the will coerce them, but only a fire kindling the soul from within makes the body to shed tears on the outside. This state of tears is the boundary between Purity and Limpidity, for they are above the place of Purity and beneath the place of Limpidity. However, they make the intellect enter the place of Limpidity.
9. After the operation of tears, an operation of two contemplations occurs in the intellect, that is, of Judgment and of Providence.[7] As a result of the vision of these things, a love of humanity descends upon the soul and a constant supplication for its conversion. When the intellect looks within itself, it sees all mankind in the form of the image of God in which it was created.[8] In the vision produced by this state, there is neither righteous person nor sinner, neither slave nor free, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, neither male nor female, but Christ appears wholly in everyone.[9]

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[6] "Tears," see Letter 5.2.

[7] See Evag. Cent. 1:27 where he enumerates the five contemplations: of the Trinity; of incorporeal beings; of corporeal beings; of Judgment; of Providence. See Beulay, ES, 370.

[8] Gen. 1:26–27.

[9] cf. Col. 3:11.

7. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܕܫ̈ܩܠܐ: ܠܝ ܡܬܒܥܢ: ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܐ
ܕܢ̈ܩܫܬܐ: ܐ̇ܠܐ ܒܬܪܗ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܢܝܚܬܐ ܕܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ
ܘܕܫܝܢܐ. ܘܗܘܝܘ ܪܝܫܐ ܡܫܘܚܠܦܘܬܐ ܕܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܘܕܫܝܢܐ ܒܝܗ
ܟܠܗ: ܕܠܝ ܡܫܒܚܐ ܐܦ ܒܝ ܢܦܫܝ ܐܝܟ ܠܡܫܡܠܝܘ ܫܒܝܠܐ:
ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܒܝܗ ܒܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܘܫܝܢܐ ܓܒܐ. ܒܗܘܐ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ:
ܡܬܒܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܫܪܝܪܐ ܢܦܫܐ ܠܗ. ܐܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܡܒܥܝ
ܘܒܪܟ ܡܠܐ ܕܡܫܡܫ ܐܢܐ ܘܦܪܐ: ܠܝ ܡܛܠܠ ܢܝܚܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ
ܡܫܡܫ ܐܢܐ: ܐܘ ܕܟܠܗ ܡܬܬܪ̈ܨܢ ܒܗ ܕܩ̈ܘܬܐ ܐܚ̈ܪܢܝܬܐ:
ܘܡܬܚܠܠܝܢ ܚܕܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܘܬܗ ܘܫܪܝܪܘ ܀

8. ܠܘܬ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܕܫܝܢܐ ܘܕܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ: ܐ̇ܠܐ ܒܬܪܗ
ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ: ܠܝ ܡܚܘܪ ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܢ̈ܩܫܬܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܐ ܫܪܝܪܐ:
ܘܐܬܠܘܗܝ ܠܐܪܚܘܬܐ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ ܘܡܫܬܡܠܝܘܬܐ ܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܙܒܢܐ.
ܗܠܝܢ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ ܠܗ ܕܙܒܢܐ ܐܝܬܝܗܝܢ. ܐܦܠܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܦܠܢܬ
ܠܟܠܗܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܗܢܐ ܦܘܪܫܢܐ ܠܒܪܝܬܐ ܡܢ ܒܝܬܗ: ܘܦܘܪܫܢܐ
ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܡܫܡܫܢ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ. ܗܕܐ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ ܠܐܚܘܕܐ
ܐܬܠܘܗܝ ܕܟܠܐ ܕܟܘܬܐ ܠܚܦܘܬܐ. ܒܟܠܗ ܓܝܪ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ
ܕܕܟܘܬܐ ܐܝܬܝܗܝܢ ܘܡܬܠܒܫܢ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܕܚܦܘܬܐ. ܒܪܡ ܕܝܢ ܗܕܝܢ
ܩ̈ܠܝܢ ܠܗ ܒܗܘܐ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܚܦܘܬܐ ܀

9. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܡܬܒܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ: ܗ̇ܘܝܐ ܒܗܘܐ ܠܘܬ ܗܘܝܐ
ܡܬܒܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܐܬܪ̈ܝܢ ܠܐܬܘܪ̈ܬܐ. ܗܢܘ ܕܝܢ. ܕܕܝܢܐ ܘܕܬܒܥܬܐ. ܘܡܢ
ܚܙܬܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܢܦܠܐ ܒܢܦܫܐ ܕܚܘܒܬܐ ܕܒܝܢܬܐ ܘܬܒܥܬܐ ܐܡܝܢܬܐ
ܕܟܠܗ ܦܘܪܫܢܐ. ܘܡܠܐ ܕܢܦܠ ܒܝܗ ܡܢܗ ܢܗܪܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ
ܒܕܘܬܐ ܕܟܠܡܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܕܐܬܒܪܝܘ ܒܗ. ܒܟܠ ܗܕܐ ܒܗܘܐ ܚܙܬܐ
ܕܗܘܐ ܫܘܚܠܦܐ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܘܬܒܥܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܒܓܒܐ ܘܒܪ ܚܙܬܐ. ܘܠܐ
ܒܪܘܪܬܐ ܘܡܘܕܥܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܕܒܪܐ ܘܡܫܒܚܐ. ܐܠܐ ܟܠܗ ܘܟܠܗ ܐܝܟ
ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܬܝܕܥܐ ܀

10. Then comes another state, that of the stirrings which arise and go up from within the heart: they are in the image of light mixed with fire. In this state, particular to the intellect, there is an operation taking place in the third and fourth sense.[10]
11. After this operation comes another state more excellent than this. It is only an activity of the second sense when it hears the sound of subtle whispers of praise—sounds which the stirrings of the soul and the body are not able to compose for the tongue. This state and this praise are of the New World. This praise is a pledge of the good things to come because this is the operation of the Spirit when the blessed Apostle said that the Spirit prays for the saints.[11] In this state the cloud of noetic stars[12] appears to you, and you hear their subtle sounds to which when they are extended, your mind is united in exalted praise.
12. After this praise, the intellect is silenced and absorbed by the light of the vision of this elevated and immaterial contemplation as a fish in the sea. For the intellect in this state is melded with that action which works in him and they become one. Indeed the light of the intellect is not separated from that sea in which it swims. In this state there is only activity of the first sense (sense of sight).

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[10] Evag. Cent. II, 35, enumeration of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. John provides an ample discussion of the guarding of the senses in Discourse 9, "On guarding the senses," V. 320b–324a.

[11] cf. Rom. 8:27. Spirit (*rûhâ*) is grammatically feminine but after the fifth century is usually treated as masculine when referring to the Holy Spirit. See Letter 51.4, 11.

[12] According to Beulay, "noetic stars" are the angels. This and the several occurrences of stars in Letter 48 are to be understood in the context of Evagrian influence on Joseph Hazzaya, the probable author of these two Letters. According to Evagrius, not only are angels noetic, but so also are the stars, having received functions similar to the angels. See Guillaumont, *"Kephalia Gnostica"*, 253–53. Evagrius was influenced in this by Origen for whom stars were considered as significant for humanity. Origen held that there is a relationship between the astral soul and the human soul. He also saw a role of the stars in instructing the soul after death. See Alan Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

10. ܒܬܪ ܕܝܢ ܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ: ܐܬܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ: ܕܟ̈ܗܢܐ ܕܢܗܘܢ ܘܦܠܚܝܢ ܒܓܘ ܟܠܐ: ܘܐܬܝܗܘܢ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܡܣܓܐ ܒܗ ܢܘܪܐ. ܒܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܢܛܪܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܠܗ ܠܗܘܢ. ܘܒܪ̈ܓܫܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܘܪܒܢܢܐ ܗ̇ܘܝܐ ܀

11. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ: ܐܬܐ ܒܬܪܗ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܡܝܬܪ ܡܢ ܗܕܐ. ܗ̇ܘܝܐ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܠܪ̈ܓܫܐ ܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܒܟܣܝܘ. ܟܕ ܦܩܕ ܡܠܐ ܕܚܒ̈ܪܐ ܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ ܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܙܒܢܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܘܕܦܓܪܐ ܦܩܕ ܠܗ ܠܒܘܟܪܐ ܕܟܣܝܐ. ܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܕܟܠܗܝܢ ܚܕܬܐ ܐܝܬܝܗ̇. ܗ̇ܝ ܕܗܝ ܐܝܬܝܗ̇ ܪܘܚܢܐ ܕܛܟ̈ܣܐ ܕܥܠܝ̈ܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܗܘܐ ܗܝ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܕܗ̇ܝ ܙܘܥܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܛܘܒܐ ܫܡܝܐ ܕܡܪܟܒܬܐ ܚܠܦ ܩܕ̈ܝܫܐ. ܒܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܬܚܘܐ ܒܝܢ ܚܝܠܐ ܕܩ̈ܕܡܝܐ ܡܬܪ̈ܒܝܢܐ. ܐܦ ܩ̈ܠܐ ܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܦܩܕ ܐܝܬ. ܗ̇ܢܘܢ ܕܡܐ ܕܡܬܦܫܛܝܢ: ܒܗܘܢ ܡܬܝܕܥ ܡܕܡ ܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܕܙܘܡܙܡܐ ܀

12. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܕܝܢ ܗܕܐ ܠܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ: ܡܫܬܠܡܐ ܗܘܐ ܘܡܫܬܒܚ ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܚܙܬܐ ܕܬܐܘܪܝܐ ܗ̇ܝ ܪܡܙܬܐ ܘܡܬܒܝܢܢܘܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܢܗܘܐ ܒܫܡܝܐ. ܒܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܗܘܐ ܟܝܢ ܗ̇ܝ ܦܫܘܪܘܬܐ ܕܦܩܕܬܐ ܒܗ. ܘܗ̇ܢܘܢ ܚܕ. ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܡܬܦܪܫ ܢܘܗܪܗ ܕܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܗ̇ܘ ܫܡܐ ܕܒܗ ܦܫܐ. ܒܗܕܐ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܪ̈ܓܫܐ ܡܩܕܫܐ ܐܝܟ ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ ܒܟܣܝܘ܀

13. After this state comes another in which a fire takes hold of a person from the soles of his feet to his head, so that when he looks at himself he does not see a composed body, but only the fire with which he is clothed. This is the state of which holy Evagrius spoke when he distinguishes those with spiritual knowledge from those who do not possess understanding. This is what he said: "Those who now have subtle bodies reign in the worlds in which they were made, but those whose bodies are yoked to ministry will reign in the worlds to come."[13] He calls "subtle bodies" the bodies of the saints which have arrived at this state of which I have spoken.
14. Lest anyone doubt about these things, we will bring other testimony to him so that he may be the more certain about this. The blessed Palladius said concerning Abba Arsenius that while he was standing in prayer and was in this state—as if all on fire—one of the brothers, a spiritual man, came and "from the window saw that the elder was engulfed in fire." The writer bore witness about this brother "that he was worthy of this vision"; because this brother who saw Abba Arsenius in this state[14] was himself a seer.
15. After this state, again there is another which may not be written of by letter. Only know that it actually occurs. And this is the sign: there are not two or three, nor even can the fourth be distinguished by the fifth, but one is extended and the other contracted and the nourishment of the two is one, in this state. For in these two states of which I have spoken, the operation is of the first sense and that of the fifth.

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[13] Subtle bodies (*gûšmê*); bodies (*pagrê*) yoked to ministry: see Evag. Cent. I, 11. Guillaumont includes a lovely variant for *pagrê*: "yoked" to the commandments. Joseph uses *gûšmê* when he speaks of the spiritual bodies of the angels. He also uses it to denote the body after the resurrection. See Beulay, LM, 30–33. Beulay thinks that perhaps this Evagrian concept of spiritual bodies influenced John in his thinking about Christ dwelling within the soul. See also Beulay, "Lettre XV," 277, note 32. See Koltun-Fromm, "Yokes of the Holy Ones," 205–18.

[14] Budge, *Book of Paradise* II , 608–609.

13. ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ܆ ܐܬܐ ܒܬܪܗ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ.
ܕܚܡܫܬܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܒܪܢܫܐ ܢܘܪܐ ܡܢ ܦܫܛ ܙܠܝܩܘܗܝ ܘܡܕܡܐ
ܠܡܣܘܚܘ. ܕܡܐ ܕܢܬܪ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܗܘ ܒܗ܆ ܠܐ ܢܬܐ ܠܨܦܪܐ
ܡܪܥܝܬܐ ܐܠܐ ܠܝ ܠܥܘܒ ܢܘܪܐ ܕܠܒܝܫ. ܗܘܘ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ
ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܡܕܡܐ ܐܘܨܪܢܫ܆ ܟܕ ܡܦܪܫ ܡܬܟܠܢܐ ܡܢ ܐܝܟܢ
ܘܠܐ ܡܢܝܢ ܡܕܠܬܐ. ܐܡܪ ܨܒܪ ܗܟܝܠ. ܘܐܝܟܢ ܕܗܘܐ ܨܦܘܬܐ
ܡܬܢܝܐ ܡܢܝܢ܆ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܕܗܘܘ ܩܕܡܝܢ. ܐܝܟܢ ܕܝܢ
ܕܒܨܦܪܐ ܦܠܘܢܐ ܡܢܝܢ܆ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܕܡܠܝܢ ܢܡܟܘܢ. ܟܕ
ܨܦܘܬܐ ܡܬܢܝܐ ܦܪܐ ܠܨܦܪܐ ܕܡܢܝܐ ܕܐܬܦܬܚܘ ܒܗܕܐ
ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܕܐܡܪܬ ܀
14. ܘܠܐ ܐܦ ܢܬܦܠܓ ܒܟܠ ܗܠܝܢ܆ ܦܠܝܓ ܒܗ ܡܫܘܕܥܘܬܐ
ܐܚܪܬܐ ܕܢܬܪ ܢܦܠܘܢ ܒܟܠ ܗܘܐ. ܐܡܪ ܨܒܪ ܛܘܒܐ ܦܐܠܘܣ
ܡܛܠ ܐܒܐ ܐܪܣܛܘܣ ܗܟܢܐ. ܕܟܕ ܦܐܡ ܒܪܟܘܬܐ ܘܗܘܐ
ܒܟܘܬܗ ܗܕܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ܆ ܕܗܘܐ ܒܟܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܢܘܪܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܦ ܡܢ
ܐܒܐ ܨܦܪܐ ܡܕܠܬܐ܆ ܘܚܕܝܘܗܝ ܒܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܒܝܬܐ ܕܐܬܠܗܘܢ
ܒܟܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܢܘܪܐ. ܘܐܦܝܣܘ ܡܬܟܬܒܐ ܒܟܠ ܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܩܘܐ ܗܘܐ
ܒܚܝܪܬܐ ܗܘܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܢܬܪܐ ܐܬܠܗܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܚܕܝܘܗܝ
ܠܐܒܐ ܐܪܣܛܘܣ ܒܗܕܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܀
15. ܬܘܒ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܕܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ܆ ܗܘܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ
ܕܒܨܦܪܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܬܬܠܒ. ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܢܗܘܢ ܗܘܐ. ܘܐܬܐܘ
ܗܘܐ ܗܘ. ܕܒܟܠ ܬܪܝܢ ܘܬܟܠܬܐ. ܘܐܦܠܐ ܪܒܝܢܘܬܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܐ
ܒܣܝܡܘܬܐ. ܐܠܐ ܚܕ ܡܬܚܫܚ ܘܐܚܪܢܐ ܡܬܦܠܓ. ܘܬܘܪܨܐ
ܕܬܪܝܢܘܢ ܚܕ ܐܬܠܗܘܢ ܒܗܕܐ ܡܘܫܚܬܐ. ܒܗܠܝܢ ܕܝܢ ܬܪܝܢ
ܡܘܫܚܬܐ ܕܐܡܪܬ܆ ܐܝܟ ܡܫܡܫܢܘܬܐ ܠܒܨܪܐ ܡܢܝܢܐ ܘܠܗܘܢ
ܢܡܘܣܐ ܀

16. After this state, again comes another which is of joy, there also are tears in it. A person does not know what is the cause of this joy. He only knows that he is joyful; the reason for his joy is not granted him. Here is the operation of the third and fourth senses because these two actions of the senses are joined to each other.
17. After this state occurs another which is a speaking in spiritual tongues, and which is an operation of the second sense.
18. We have shown as much as we are able about the operation of grace so far. My friend, let us speak now about the deception of the Rebels, a deception which resembles the truth.
19. Primarily I will speak concerning the states which produce heat. The demon of fornication begins thus to produce heat in those who minister: the heat begins from the head and descends, as it were, downwards while a great weight presses heavily on the head, troubling it and burdening it with a very deep sleep. Though he is not yet able to sow the seed of his evil, the demon advises him that neither reading nor psalms are necessary during this activity of the heat. If the person obeys him, thus he increases his heat so much that it causes harm to the brain. But if he does not obey his counsel and begins with recitation of the psalms and with reading, then the demon descends from the head and kindles his fire around the heart or in the back against the heart.

16. ܬܘܒ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܗܢܐ ܡܘܣܝܩܐ: ܐ̇ܬܐ ܒܬܪܗ ܡܘܣܝܩܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܚܕܘܬܐ. ܐܦ ܕܩ̈ܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܗ. ܘܠܐ ܢܕܥ ܒܪܢܫܐ ܡܢܐ ܗܘ ܒܟܠܗ ܕܗܕܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ. ܒܠܚܘܕ ܕܢܕܐ ܢܕܥ. ܘܡܛܠ ܡܢܐ ܢܕܐ ܠܐ ܡܦܫܩ. ܗܘܪܐ ܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܪ̈ܫܡܐ ܠܐܠܗܝܐ ܘܪܘܚܢܝܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܡܟܝ̈ܟܘܬܐ ܕܗܠܝܢ ܐܬ̈ܝܢ ܪ̈ܫܡܐ ܢܩܦܢ ܠܟܢ̈ܝܕܐ ܀

17. ܒܬܪ ܕܝܢ ܗܢܐ ܡܘܣܝܩܐ: ܗܘ̇ܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܐܪܡܘܢܝܐ ܡܡܟܠܠ ܪܘܚܢܐ: ܕܐܝܟܢܐ ܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܫܡܐ ܠܐܪܘܚܐ ܀

18. ܒܟܠ ܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܛܒܥܘܬܐ: ܒܕܡܐ ܠܟܘܪܒܐ. ܐܡܟܐ ܕܦܩܡܢ ܐܘܪܓܢ. ܒܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ ܐܘ̄ ܢܟܢܟܝ: ܒܟܠ ܛܥܒܝ ܕܡܬܪܘܕܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܠܘܕܝܐ ܒܡܪܕܐ ܀

19. ܡܕܡܐܝܬ ܕܝܢ ܐ̇ܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܒܟܠ ܡܘܣ̈ܝܩܐ ܕܦܣܩܘܪܘܬܐ ܘܢܡܘܣܡܘܬܐ. ܡܡܪܐ ܕܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܕܐܚܘܬܐ ܕܒܟܝ ܢܡܘܣܡܘܬܐ ܒܟܘܠ ܦܟܘܬܐ ܗܟܝܠ. ܡܡܪܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܗܘ ܢܡܘܣܡܘܬܐ ܡܢ ܪܝܫܐ ܘܢܣܝܬܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܠܐܢܫ. ܒܗ ܗܘܡܪܐ ܦܫܝܛܬܐ ܦܫܝܛ ܒܟܠ ܪܝܫܐ. ܘܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܕܒܟܠܗ ܕܪܝܫܐ: ܘܗܘܡܪܐ ܘܦܫܝܛܘܬܐ ܕܝܬܝܪܘܬܐ ܦܫܝܛܬܐ. ܡܢ ܒܕܒܟܠ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܟܝܢܘܬܗ ܠܐ ܡܦܩܣ ܙܘܥ ܒܗ ܘܡܕܠܐ. ܡܢ ܦܣܩܝܢ ܒܗ ܘܠܐ ܡܬܩܒܠ ܒܗ ܒܗܘܐ ܦܣܩܘܪܘܬܐ ܠܐ ܡܙܢܐ ܐܦܠܐ ܡܙܡܘܪܐ. ܐܝܟ ܡܬܟܬܡܝܢ ܒܗ ܒܪܢܫܐ. ܗܟܘܬ ܡܫܩܠ ܒܗ ܒܢܡܘܣܡܘܬܗ: ܒܕܡܐ ܕܟܕܝܢ ܢܚܝܢܐ ܒܡܘܣܝܩܐ. ܘܐܝܟܘ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܟܬܡܝܢ ܒܟܬܒܗ: ܘܡܡܪܐ ܒܡܙܡܘܪܐ ܘܒܡܙܢܝܐ: ܗܝܕܝܢ ܢܣܒ ܡܢ ܪܝܫܐ ܘܦܪܝܫ ܠܟܢ ܒܢܡܘܣܡܘܬܗ ܚܪ̈ܝܢ ܒܟܠ. ܐܘ̇ ܒܥܕܢܐ ܠܡܘܣܝܩܘܬܗ ܕܟܠܐ ܀

20. This is the sign of his deception: when his heat begins, torpidity also begins in the body, and troubling thoughts from within of vain glory and perceptions of tasteless things, while much distraction of thoughts gets control of the intellect. Here in this state the demon also produces a deceptive smell. Now this is the sign of the smell: the more it smells, the more does corruption of the thoughts reign in the soul. He also produces his smell from the natures of creatures because it has a resemblance to them. But the smell of grace, this vivifying sense, has no likeness with these earthly things that are related to this sense. Here vigil and prostration before the cross are required of those who minister until this temptation passes.
21. Once again, the Enemy migrates toward the lower members and begins kindling his heat in him, together with thoughts of fornication. This rises up as far as the kidneys. The remedy for this temptation is fasting, constant vigil, and abstention from drinking water; also frequent walks while reciting psalms and reading, and by not reclining to sleep, but sitting or standing as long as one is in this temptation.
22. Then again concerning other states of forms made manifest by the demons, listen!
23. Whenever in contemplation you see the image of a fiery chariot,[15] know and take heed that this is a distraction of the Beguiler who wants to capture you by it for your perdition. O laborer, fix your gaze instead within the outer form, and you will find there another form seeming to be full of darkness. For as soon as one who is spiritual sees the image which is depicted before him, the fraud of its deception is made known.

[15] This is possibly a reference to the fiery chariot of Ezekiel 1:10 which became part of the early Merkabah tradition.

20. ܐܬ̇ܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܬܚܒܠܘܬܗ ܗܘܐ ܗܘ. ܒܡܗ ܕܡܫܪܝܐ ܢܡܘܣܝܘܬܐ
ܕܠܗ܇ ܠܝܕܘܥܬܐ ܡܫܪܝܐ ܒܦܣܪܐ. ܘܡܣܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܢܡ̈ܘܣܐ
ܕܡܘܒܠܐ ܡܫܪܝܐ ܡܢ ܟܠܗ. ܘܡܩ̈ܒܠܐ ܕܙܕܝܩܘܬܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܟܠܗܘܢ
ܬܒܥܐ. ܘܦܬܘܚܐ ܡܣܝܒܐ ܕܢܡ̈ܘܣܐ ܡܫܬܠܛܐ ܥܠ ܗܘܝܐ. ܐܦ
ܫܘܡܐ ܕܬܒܥܘܬܐ ܚܒܝܒ ܗܘܝܐ ܒܗܘܝܐ ܡܘܣܟܠܐ. ܒܪܡ ܕܝܢ ܐܬܐ
ܕܫܘܡܐ ܕܠܗ ܗܘܐ ܐܠܗܐ. ܕܒܡܐ ܕܬܒܪ ܡܚܝܡܘܬܐ ܕܢܡ̈ܘܣܐ
ܦܡܟܠܐ ܒܢܦܫܐ. ܐܦ ܫܘܡܗ ܡܢ ܡܬܝܐ ܕܒܪܝܬܐ ܚܒܝܒ ܠܗ.
ܒܗܘ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܕܒܗܘܬܐ. ܠܫܘܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܬܒܥܘܬܐ ܟܠܗ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ
ܕܒܗܘܬܐ ܡܢ ܗܘܟܢ ܕܒܐܘܪܚܐ܇ ܕܟܗܘܝܐ ܦܫܝܛܐ ܡܣܬܒܪ. ܗܘܪܒܐ
ܡܗܝܪ ܘܡܦܘܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܕܡ ܙܒܢܝܐ ܡܬܟܒܝܐ ܠܦܠܣܘܦܐ܇ ܒܕܡܐ
ܕܚܒܪ ܢܡܘܣܝܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܀

21. ܠܘܬ ܕܝܢ ܡܢܝܢܐ ܒܒܟܪܒܒܐ ܟܠܗ ܩܕܡܐ ܠܐܢܫܘܬܐ. ܘܡܦܪܐ ܘܦܪܚ
ܠܗ ܠܢܡܘܣܝܘܬܗ. ܘܡܠܟܗ ܢܡ̈ܘܣܐ ܕܟܝܢܐ. ܗܘܐ ܕܝܢ ܫܟܠܝܐ
ܒܝܕܐ ܠܟܠܚܕܬܐ. ܫܡܗ ܕܝܢ ܕܗܘܐ ܢܡܘܣܐ ܐܠܗܝܐ. ܙܘܕܐ
ܘܡܗܝܪ ܐܡܝܢܐ܇ ܘܡܣܝܒܪܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܡܫܐ ܕܡܬܝܐ. ܐܦ ܗܘܟܢܬܐ
ܐܡܝܢܬܐ ܟܡ ܡܬܚܡܘܬܐ ܘܡܪܝܐ. ܘܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܢܡܘܣ ܐܝܟ ܒܝ ܦܠܘܣܐ.
ܐܠܐ ܒܪ ܢܫܐܒ ܐܘ ܒܪ ܦܐܡ ܟܠܠ ܩܠܣܘܗܝ܇ ܒܡܠܐ ܙܒܢܐ
ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ ܒܗܘܝܐ ܢܡܘܣܝܐ ܀

22. ܠܘܬ ܕܝܢ ܟܠܠ ܡܣܬܟܠܐ ܐܝܬܝܐ ܕܕܡܩܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܡܬܐܡܪ
ܡܫܡܥ ܀

23. ܟܠܠ ܐܡܠܟ ܕܢܚܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܠܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܢܘܪܐ ܕܡܪܕܘܬܐ܇ ܕܟܝ
ܘܒܝܬ ܕܗܘܐ ܦܣܩ ܗܘܐ ܕܢܦܠܐ ܕܪܒܐ ܕܢܘܕܥ ܒܗ ܠܐܒܝܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܝܬ
ܐܘ̄ ܦܠܘܣܐ܇ ܐܢܐ ܚܙܝܬ ܟܠܗ ܡܢ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܐܪܝܬܐ. ܘܡܫܟܚ ܐܝܬ
ܟܠܗ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܚܙܝܐ ܒܪ ܡܟܠܐ ܢܦܫܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܒܪ ܡܫܠܡܘ
ܕܢܦܠ ܚܙܬܗ ܕܢܘܟܠܝܐ ܟܠܠ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܝܙܝܐ ܡܢܡܘܬܗ܇
ܡܬܦܪܫܐ ܙܐܦܐ ܕܬܒܥܘܬܗ ܀

24. Even if you see the form of a sphere before you, this is also an illusion of the demons. Or if you see the shape of stars or a rainbow, or the image of a throne or a chariot and fiery horses, all of these my brother are a deception of the demons.[16] In brief, everything which appears outside of you in these images is a deception of the demons. For the vision of contemplation is simple and has no set form, whether it appears within or outside. The demons indeed have no authority to enter within and show their deception. But if you sometimes see the form of a sphere or a star within you, do not be disturbed because the soul also is visible in these forms. But keep yourself from the things which are visible from the outside.
25. Take heed, my brother, and also guard against another form the demons demonstrate which is mixed with light and darkness: that is, the activity of the demon of anger. There is another form whose light is powerfully bright, and this form is of the demon of fornication. Then, there is yet another fiery one which is from the demon of pride.

[16] A rejection of the throne and chariot of the Merkabah is not intended here, but rather a caution about looking on images without discernment. The Mishnah cautions that the Merkabah should only be taught to the wise and to those able to draw profit from it (Hagigah 2.1). And Midrash Rabbah says that Ezekiel himself will come again to reveal the secrets of the chariot (Canticles Rabbah 1.4).

24. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܒܚܠܡܐ ܐܫܟܚܢܐ ܚܙܐ ܐܠܐ ܡܕܡ܆ ܐܦ ܗܕܐ
ܦܐܢܛܐܣܝܐ ܗܝ ܕܡܢ ܫ̈ܐܕܐ. ܐܘ ܕܒܚܠܡܐ ܒܫ̈ܢܬܐ ܐܘ ܕܒܡܠܬܐ
ܕܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ ܚܫ̈ܘܟܐ. ܐܘ ܕܒܚܠܡܐ ܒܫܘܪܝܐ܆ ܐܘ ܡܢ ܒܥܠܬܐ ܘܪ̈ܘܚܐ
ܕܢܘܪܐ܆ ܗܟܢ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܐܝܟ܆ ܚܙܘܬܐ ܐܠܝܗܘܢ ܕܫ̈ܐܕܐ.
ܘܕܒܫܘܬܦܘܬܐ ܐܡܪ. ܕܒܠܥܕܝܗܘܢ ܕܠܒܪ ܡܢ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܒܗܠܝܢ
ܘܡܛܠ܆ ܚܙܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܫ̈ܐܕܐ. ܚܕܐ ܗܟܝܠ ܕܬܐܘܪܝܐ ܦܫܝܛܬܐ
ܐܠܗܝܬ ܘܟܠܗ ܒܗ ܕܒܥܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ. ܠܐ ܠܝ ܠܟܘܢ ܡܠܐܟܐ
ܘܠܐ ܠܝ ܠܒܪ. ܫ̈ܐܕܐ ܕܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܟܠܗ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܬܟܬܫܝܢ
ܕܢܟܠܘܢ ܘܢܚܘܘܢ ܕܡ̈ܠܬܐ ܕܚܙܘܬܗܘܢ. ܐܝܟ ܚܙܐ ܐܠܐ ܒܥܝܢ
ܠܟܘܢ ܡܢ ܕܒܚܠܡܐ ܐܫܟܚܢܐ ܐܘ ܒܫ̈ܢܬܐ܆ ܠܐ ܬܬܐܕܝܢ. ܡܛܠ
ܕܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ ܐܦ ܢܦܫܐ ܒܗܠܝܢ ܡܫܬܚܠܦܐ. ܐܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ
ܕܡܢ ܠܒܪ ܡܠܐܟܝܢ ܐܬܐܡܪ ܀
25. ܘܒܗܝ ܐܝܟ ܐܬܐܡܪ ܠܘܬ ܐܦ ܡܢ ܕܒܥܘܬܐ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܕܡܬܚܙܝܢ ܫ̈ܐܕܐ܆
ܕܡܫܬܚܠܦܝܢ ܒܚܙܘܐ ܘܒܚܠܡܐ܆ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܡܬܚܙܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܫ̈ܐܕܐ
ܕܪ̈ܘܚܐ. ܘܐܝܟ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܕܚܙܝܐ ܡܬܚܙܝܢܘܬܐ ܕܠܗܘܢ. ܘܗܕܐ ܕܒܥܘܬܐ
ܗܝ ܕܫ̈ܐܕܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ. ܐܝܟ ܕܝܢ ܕܒܥܘܬܐ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܕܚܙܝܐ܆ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ
ܕܫ̈ܐܕܐ ܕܪܡܙܬܐ ܀

26. O my brother, you can distinguish all of these things by the sign which I tell you: whenever you see one of these forms, if peace and quiet reign over your thoughts when it is revealed, know that this is the operation of grace without deceit. But if when you see these forms, your soul's contemplation begins to contract and your heart is filled with fatigue, horrid thoughts, and also distraction: know that this is from the demons, like the other images which the demons spread, imitating the images that occur by grace in the soul at the time of prayer.
27. My friend, I have set down briefly these things for you as I was required by love for you. O valiant laborer, read and understand what is set down before you. And pray for me.

26. ܗܟܝܢ ܕܝܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ ܦܪ̈ܘܫ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܐܘ̄ ܐܚ̈ܝ: ܡܢ ܢܟܝܠܐ
ܕܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ. ܒܠܠ ܐܡܠܟ ܕܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܚܙܐ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܘ̈ܬܐ:
ܕܡܐ ܕܡܬܓܠܝܢܐ ܒܟܒܢ: ܚܘܡܟܢ ܦܢܝܐ ܘܒܗܘܕܟܘܬܐ
ܫܡܥܟܢ ܒܟܠܗܘܢ: ܕܟܕ ܕܗܘܐ ܡܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܒܝ̣
ܚܒܠ ܒܗ̇ ܙܒܢܐ. ܐܝܟ ܡܐ ܕܚܙܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܡܘ̈ܬܐ ܗܟܝܢ: ܦܪ̈ܘܫ
ܦܣܩܐ ܠܬܘܪܥܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܝ: ܘܡܬܛܦܠܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܗܢܝܐ: ܘܡܬܒܣܡܐ
ܚܘܫ̈ܒܐ ܐܦ ܦܘܢܐ: ܕܟܕ ܕܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܫ̈ܠܝܐ ܐܠܗܝ̈ܐ. ܒܗܢ ܫܪ̈ܒܐ
ܕܕܡܘ̈ܬܐ ܐܢܬܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܫ̈ܠܝܐ ܡܬܚܘܝܢ. ܗܟܝܢ ܕܡܬܕܟܪܝܢ
ܒܗܟܝܢ ܕܡܢ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܗܘܝܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܢܦܫܐ ܒܒܢܝ ܝܒܘܬܐ ❖
27. ܗܟܝܢ ܢܟܝܒܝ ܐܒܗܬܐ ܕܐܬܬܒܟܠ ܡܢ ܚܕܟܢ ܘܫܡܥܠ ܠܟܢ
ܒܡܫܝܚܘܬܐ. ܐܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܘ̄ ܦܠܘܚܐ ܙܥܘܪܐ ܡܢܟ ܘܐܫܬܒܩܠܐ ܡܢܟܢ
ܕܪܚܡܝܢ ܡܢܟܘܢ. ܘܫܠܡ ܠܟܠܟ ❖

List Of Some Syriac Terms
(with a partial listing of occurrences in the text)

aggen (overshadow): 5.1; 15.6.
ʿâlmâ hadṯâ (New World): 2.6; 4.8–9; 15.2; 43.2; 48.5.
ʿarpellâ (cloud, thick darkness): 1.3; 15.2,6; 36.5; 47.6; 51.8.
atrâ (place, sphere): 1.3–5; 10.2; 11.2; 17.3; 23.1; 38.2; 39.10; 40.4; 47.6; 48.5,11.

berâ (create): 5.3–4; 11.2; 43.22.

dakyûtâ (purity): 13.2; 15.8; 19.6–7; 28.2; 40.1; 43.1; 50.3,7,18.
demûtâ, dumyâ (likeness, resemblance, form): 2.1,6; 4.5; 7.2; 29.1; 35.2; 36.3; 40.6; 43.2; 49.9 51.12.

ʿenyânâ (converse, fellowship): Introd. xvii–xviii; cf. 12.1–3.
essârâ (link): 47.8

gebal (form, fashion): 25.1.
gûšmâ (body, subtle/ ethereal): 4.8; 13.2; 38.1; 49.13.
gmîrûtâ (perfection, maturity): 36.6; 40.14.

ḥaïlê: (powers): 10.1; 13.2; 17.2; 38.1; 40.14; 50.10,12.
ḥâšôššûtâ (la) (impassibility): 48.8.
hawnâ (intellect): 2.6; 15.3; 19.6; 23.2; 29.1; 34.2; 40.3,7; 50.6.
ḥézwâ (vision): 2.6; 17.2; 36.5; 50.6.
ḥlt (mingle, join, unite): 4.5; 34.2; 51.5,13,16.
ḥtîpûtâ (rapture): Introd. xiv; cf. 16, passim.
ḥuššsâbê (thoughts): 44.2; 45.3; 49.6; 50.1; 51.3.
ḥzâtâ (vision): 15.10; 28.1; 51, passim.

îhîdâyâ (solitary or single one): 4.7; 22.2; 39.7; 40.1; 51.13.
ʿîqârâ (glory): Introd. xv.

kul (all): 51.10; Again...9,18; passim.

maʼbḏânûtê (operations): 10.1; 12.4; 25.2; 29.1; 48, 49, passim.
maggnânûtâ (overshadowing): 13.2.
mahzîtâ (mirror): 7.3; 14.2; 15.1; 28.2; 45.3; 50.19; 51.13.
makkîkûtâ, mukkâkâ (humility, humiliation): 44.2; 50.16; Again..., passim.
métdarkânâ (lâ) (incomprehensible): 25, passim.

mšâmšanê (servants, ministering angels): 15.6; 20.7; 31.4.
mšuhtâ (measure, level): 20.4; 48.4.

néšyonê (temptations): 32.1–2; 33.1–2.

pagrâ (body): 4.2; 13.3; 20.4; 31.2; 34.2; 38.3; 40.7; 47.10; 49.5, 13; 51.5.
pârêsiyâ (freedom, familiariy): 5.2; 36.4, 6; 40.3; 51.4,13.

qnômâ (being, substance, hypostasis): 7.2; 15.8; 47.9; 51.2.
qyâmâ (covenant): 4.2; 18.28.

râzâ (mystery, symbol, sacrament): 1.5; 2.5–6; 4.7–9; 5.2; 12.4; 17.3; 38.2; 39.2,10; 47.5–8; Again... 16.
rîhâ'd-haye' (fragrance of life): 1.1; 45.3; 51.3.
rawwâyûtâ (inebriation): 7.1–2; 11.4; 12.2; 25.4; 36.2; 46.2; 47.5.
rémzâ (sign): 33.1; 40.11.
rûhâ (spirit): 5.2–3; 12.5; 13.2–3; 27.1; 28.2; 40.1; 45.2–3; 50.10; 51.4.

sâ'ôrûtê (actions): 49.5
salmâ (image): 15.3; 29.1; 49.9; 51.13; Again...21
sukkâlê (insights): 4.5; 39.2; 48.5,8,9; 49.6
šapyûtâ (limpidity): 2.6; 4.5; 48.11–13; 51.13.
šélyâ (stillness): 45.3; 47.5; 49.5; 51.16.
šetka (silence): 1.4–5; 10.1; 15.2; 17.3; 22.3; 25.4; 31.4; 45.3; 47.4.
skîntâ (Shekhina): Introd. xv.
šûbhâ (glory of God): 7.2; 11.1–2; 14.3; 47.8,10; 50.5,19; 51.10,12.
šuhlâpê (variations, changes, states, transformation): 4.5; 37.1; 50.2; 51.5.
šumlâyâ (completion, fulfillment, perfection): 5.2; 10.1; 12.1, 3, 8; 40.14.
šuprâ (beauty): 2.4–6; 4.6–7; 5.2; 11.3; 12.2,7; 13.3; 14.2; 28.1; 36.3; 47.4,9; 50.19; 51.7; Again...22.
šupra baruya (creative beauty):10.1.

ṭaksâ (level, order): 15.1; 26.1.
tehrâ (wonder, astonishment): 1.4–5; 2.4–5; 4.6; 12.3,8; 24.1; 29.1; 46.1; 47.9.
témhâ (wonder, stupor): 1.5; 4.5; 10.1; 12.8; 13.3; 14.2; 16.1–2; 17.3; 46.3; 47.4,6; 51.16.
têôryâ (contemplation): 15.10; 48.8–10, 12, 13; 49.9, 12.
téšbohtâ (praise): 4.1; cf. 5.3; 31.4; 40.14; 45.3.
trîšût nîšâ (integrity of purpose): 19.5.
tyâbûtâ (repentance): 43, passim.

'uhdânâ dalâhâ (remembrance of God): 15.10; 20.3; 31.2; 38.3; 50, passim; 51.2; Again...13, 19, 22.

zaw'ê (stirrings, movements): 39.7; passim.

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